NOMADIC PASTORAL TRIBES AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE OTTOMAN, PERSIAN AND RUSSIAN EMPIRES (1820s–1890s)

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ABSTRACT

Nomadic Pastoral Tribes at the Intersection of the Ottoman,

Persian and Russian Empires (1820s–1890s)

This dissertation studies the changing military, political and economic relations between the Ottoman Empire and pastoral nomadic tribes that were wandering at the intersection of the Ottoman, Persian and Russian imperial borders during the long nineteenth century. Focusing on the nomadic pastoral Zilan, Celali and Haydaran tribes, I discuss how imperial wars, the making of the borders and imperial policies influenced tribes and tribe-state relations. It argues that despite such developments deeply influenced the political, social, and economic organization of the tribes, as well as their pastoral habitat and their local relations, these developments created new political and institutional spaces for the tribes in which they actively participated. Particular attention is paid to the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire and its tribal policy starting from the 1850s. The dissertation demonstrates how the reforms of the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire were redefined at local level in relation to the changing dynamics of tribal responses and border politics. Rather than seeing tribes and states as two hostile camps, it discusses how they complemented each other politically, militarily, and economically at several occasions.

This dissertation also discusses how pasturing grounds became sites of contention among the tribes and between the peasantry and tribes during the late nineteenth century due to the increasing commercialization of the pastoral production. It indicates how direct relations between tribes and the Ottoman Empire, and the commercialization of pastoral production led to the internal stratification, and territorialization of the tribal groups.

ÖZET

Osmanlı, İran ve Rus İmparatorlukları Kesişiminde Göçebe Pastoral Aşiretler (1820ler–1890lar)

Bu tez, uzun on dokuzuncu yüzyıl boyunca Osmanlı, İran ve Rus imparatorluk sınırlarının kesiştiği coğrafyada yaşayan göçebe pastoral topluluklar ile Osmanlı İmparatorluğu arasındaki değişen askeri, politik ve ekonomik ilişkileri incelemektedir. Tez, göçebe Zilan, Celali ve Haydaran aşiretlerini merkeze alarak, imparatorluklar arası savaşların, sınır inşa süreçlerinin, idari ve iktisadi politikaların bu aşiretler üzerindeki etkilerini ve devlet-aşiret ilişkilerini nasıl şekillendirdiğini tartışmaktadır. Tüm bu süreçler - aşiretlerin politik, sosyal ve ekonomik organizasyonlarını, pastoral döngülerini ve yerel ilişkilerini derinden etkilemiş olsa da - aşiretlere müdahil olabilecekleri yeni politik ve kurumsal alanlar yaratmıştır. Çalışmanın önemli bir kısmı sınırın Osmanlı İmparatorluğu tarafına ve Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun 1850'lerden itibaren uyguladığı aşiret politikalarına değiniyor. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun icra eylediği reformların, aşiret tepkilerine ve sınır politikalarına bağlı olarak yerelde yeniden şekillendiğini gösteriyor. Aşiretleri ve merkezileşen imparatorlukları mutlak karşıtlık üzerinden okumak yerine çoğu zaman politik, askeri ve iktisadi alanlarda birbirini tamamlayan iki taraf olarak görüyor.

Bu tez, aynı zamanda pastoral üretimin ticarileşmesinin geç on dokuzuncu yüzyılda yaylak alanları üzerinde aşiretler arası ve aşiretler ile köylüler arasındaki çatışmaları daha da artırdığını dile getiriyor. On dokuzuncu yüzyılın ikinci yarısında kurulan doğrudan devlet-aşiret ilişkilerine ek olarak pastoral üretimin ticarileşmesinin aşiretlerin daha hiyerarşik ve bölgesel gruplar olarak ortaya çıkmasında rol oynadığını gösteriyor.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation concerns the changing political, fiscal, and military relations between tribal groups and imperial states in the nineteenth century Northeastern Anatolia and Lesser Caucasus. Focusing on the confederations of the Kurdish Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran tribes whose migrations spanned the intersection of Ottoman, Persian and Russian Empires, it analyzes how nomadic pastoral tribes received, experienced, and responded to the military, political, and economic policies of these rival empires. On the one hand, it examines the social, economic, and political transformations that these tribal confederations underwent over the course of their long interactions with these empires. On the other hand, it indicates how centralizing and modernizing imperial powers redefined and adapted their projects and policies along the frontier zone that these tribes inhabited. One main argument of this dissertation is that these tribes and these centralizing nineteenth-century imperial states did not act as hostile, opposing camps – rather, they completed each other politically, militarily, and fiscally during the long nineteenth century. Their mutual interdependence and interaction transformed not only tribal organization but also imperial structures along this frontier zone.

The tribal confederations under consideration were located at the intersection of the borderlands of the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires. As the military frontier of three rival powers, – occupied by mobile as well as settled populations of various ethnic and religious backgrounds that were governed mostly through indirect administration – this region is an excellent setting to examine and explain state-tribe relations in an age of imperial centralization and modernization. It reveals how the

‘war making,’ ‘state making,’ and ‘border making’ efforts of nineteenth-century imperial powers influenced pastoral nomadic tribal communities, their economic activities, and the nature of state-tribe relations. It also indicates how tribes actively participated in each phase of these processes and how tribal responses shaped the nature of ‘war making’, ‘state making’ and ‘border making’ from bottom to up. The focus is not limited to state-tribe relations, though; particular attention is paid to the commercialization of pastoral production and its influence on the social and political organization of the tribes as well as their relations with other tribes and non-tribal communities.

During the nineteenth century, tribal communities (nomadic, semi-nomadic, and settled) accounted for a considerable portion of the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires demographically as well as spatially. Despite their long history of interaction, the relations between the tribes and empires gained an entirely new dimension in the nineteenth century. In an age of imperial centralization and expansionism, tribal communities were considered as a hitherto untapped source of human power and revenue for the projects of these imperial powers. Bringing the tribal communities under direct state control, integrating them into imperial administrative structures, transforming tribal identities into imperial ones, and establishing an efficient system of taxation and conscription among them became enduring state projects for the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires alike. The extension of central Ottoman authority to Asian and African frontier provinces, the Russian military expansion into the southern steppes and the Caucasus, and Persian attempts to exert control and mediate among large tribal confederations stretching from Azerbaijan to Khorasan resulted in new sets of relations between the empires and the tribes in the nineteenth century.

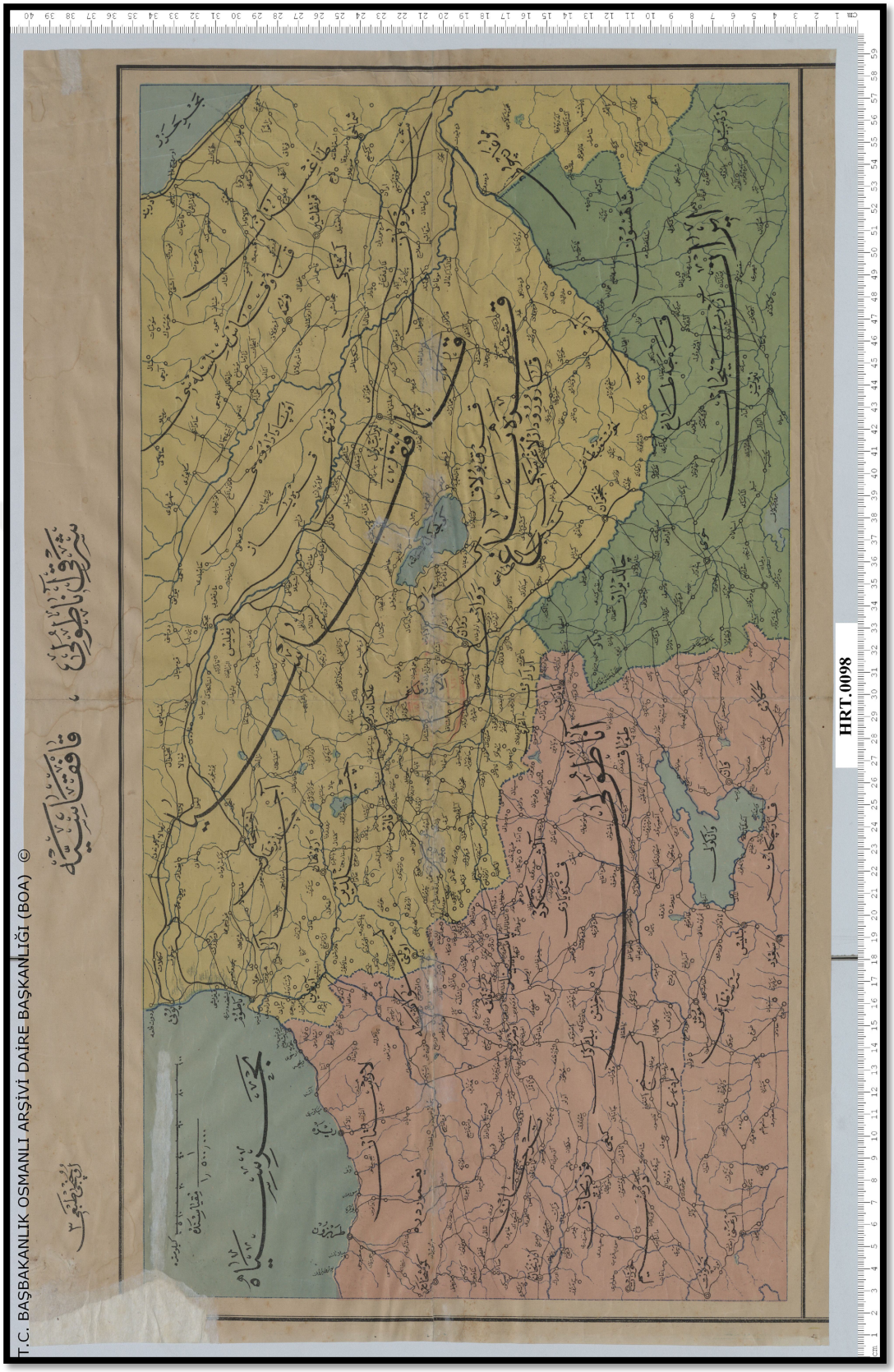

Figure 1. Northeastern Anatolia and Caucasus in early 20th century
Source: [BOA, HRT.h 98A]

1.1 The literature on state-tribe relations

Despite their prominence in the politics of the nineteenth century, tribal groups were long neglected as subjects of academic interest. Michael Khodarkovsky, in his work on the nomads of the steppes along Russia's southern frontier, argues that "traditional western historiography, which was formed during the heyday of nation-states, deemed the history of the steppe peoples to be of no visible significance because nomadic tribes were not state organized societies."[1] The same cannot be said of Middle Eastern tribal organizations, since historically they played decisive roles in the formation as well as dissolution of many states. Still, the nineteenth-century tribes of the Middle East have either been touched upon only indirectly or perceived and studied in opposition to central authorities. Indeed, Samira Haj argues that under the influence of orientalist literature, tribes of the Middle East have been presumed to "have a distinctive socio-economic structure that sets them apart from and in opposition to settled population and any form of central authority."[2] Studies on nineteenth-century state-tribe relations, in particular, assume that centralizing, territorializing imperial states and tribal groups were incompatible, hostile camps that were always in conflict. Tribes have been defined as autonomous, primitive, isolated groups constructed around kinship ties, while imperial powers were territorial, central structures that claimed a monopoly on violence in a territorially-bounded geography. In such a conceptualization tribes are not only assumed to be an

[1] Khodarkovsky, *Russia's Steppe Frontier*, 3. For instance, Khodarkovsky argues that "William McNeill's celebrated book Europe's Steppe Frontier (Chicago, 1964) does not contain a single reference to any of the numerous steppe peoples." 3.

[2] Haj, "The Problems of Tribalism," 45. The conflict and dichotomy between nomads and settlers has been expressed by the term "the desert and the sown" in western literature. The phrase, as J. Lenzen argues, became popular after the publication of the Gertrude Bell's travel account *The Desert and the Sown* in 1907. It refers to an essential cultural, political and economic difference between the desert (inhabited by nomads) and the town (settled by cultivators). See Bell, *The Desert and the Sown*. For a critique of this dichotomy, see J. Lenzen, "The Dessert and the Sown."

obstacle to economic and social progress but a threat to central authority and public security.

Since the 1960s, historians – especially those in touch with the fields of anthropology and ethnography – introduced different perspectives and methodologies to understand tribal organizations and their relations with state rulers and non-tribal organizations.[3] Tribes are no longer treated as primitive, autonomous communities waiting for imperial subordination at an age of imperial modernization and centralization, but as social, economic, and political units engaged in mutual relations with states and non-tribal groups. These studies bring about a more refined approach to tribes and the ways in which they received, responded to, and shaped imperial policies.[4]

Rather than regarding tribes and imperial states as mutually-exclusive categories, some scholars draw attention to their coexistence and mutual dependence in different historical moments. Such studies also emphasize that tribes were not passive receivers of imperial policy; rather, they were important agents that adapted themselves to historical circumstance. In the nineteenth-century Middle East, when tribes constituted an important proportion of the population and were located mostly along the frontiers of empires, relations between centralizing imperial states and tribes did not always remain oppositional. In several instances, imperial states like the Qajars and Ottomans, by creating or strengthening tribal formations, sought to better control and stabilize their frontier zones. Lois Beck, who draws attention to the symbiotic relations between the state and tribes in Iran, emphasizes the difficulty of

[3] For such anthropological, ethnographic, and historical case studies, see Barth, *Nomads of South Persia*; Garthwaite, *Khans and Shahs*; Tapper, *Frontier Nomads of Iran*.
[4] For a collection of articles on different aspects of nomad-peasant, tribe-state relations, see Nelson, *The Desert and the Sown: Nomads in the Wider Society*; Tapper, *The Conflict of Tribe and State in Iran and Afghanistan*; Khoury and Kostiner, *Tribe and State Formation in the Middle East*.

defining these two systems as distinct units. State rulers needed tribes for their military power, revenue, and the local security they provided; tribes, in turn, depended on state intervention in cases of regional competition and conflict.[5] Beck analyzes how Qajar authorities confirmed or appointed khans of the Qashqai nomads of Southwest Iran as local governors (*il-khanı*) and made them "government officials responsible for handling tribal as well as non-tribal affairs, such as tax collection, conscription and order."[6] Likewise, Richard Tapper argues that in the "Middle East, groups referred to as tribes have never, in historical times, been isolated groups of 'primitives,' remote from contact with states or their agents; rather, tribes and states have created and maintained each other in a single system, though one of inherent instability."[7]

In the case of the Ottoman Empire, there was a close relationship between state rulers and various tribal communities from the beginning. Reşat Kasaba, who takes a critical look at statist approaches, indicates that from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries the mobility of nomadic tribes, rather than being treated as a problem, was utilized by the Ottoman state for territorial expansion as well during colonization and settlement of newly conquered lands.[8] Likewise, during the sixteenth century, the Ottomans expanded into Eastern Anatolia, and a close relationship between the Ottoman state and Kurdish tribal confederations came into being. Kurdish tribal confederations (which were not necessarily nomadic) and emirates were effectively given fiscal and military autonomy in return for loyalty and

[5] Beck, "Tribes and the State in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Iran," 192.
[6] Beck, "Iran and Qashqai Tribal Confederacy," 298
[7] Tapper, "Anthropologists, Historians, and Tribespeople," 51
[8] Kasaba, "Do States Always Favor Statis?" See also Barkan, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda bir İskan ve Kolonizasyon Metodu."

support of the Ottoman Empire at a time when an Ottoman and Safavid rivalry was gaining momentum.[9]

Whether nomadic, semi-nomadic, or settled, tribes played crucial roles in the military and fiscal organization of the empire. They constituted an important proportion of Ottoman military might. Many were integrated into the *derbend* (mountain passes) institution, in which they were charged with maintaining security in rural areas in return for exemption from certain taxes and obligations.[10] Many nomadic tribes also protected the main trade routes in various provinces in today's Anatolian, Syrian, and Iraqi landscapes.[11] As they possessed large numbers of pack animals like camels and mules, nomadic tribes also took an active part in the long distance transport of goods and commodities, dealing either with merchants or with state officials. For instance, during the Ottoman Baghdad Campaign of 1639, the Ottoman imperial government rented large numbers of camels from the Turcoman confederations of the Yeni-il and Halep tribes.[12] Furthermore, fiscal relations among state rulers, urban settlers, and tribal groups is revealed in the provisioning of meat to urban capitals by pastoral nomadic tribes. Yonca Köksal and Mehmet Polatel indicate how the pastoral economy of the Cihanbeyli tribe of Central Anatolia was vital to the meat supply of the Ottoman imperial capital in the nineteenth century.[13] Köksal and Polatel by focusing on the supply of sheep from the Cihanbeyli, indicate not only the economic importance of pastoral nomads but also the mutual dependence of urban centers and nomadic tribes.[14]

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[9] Özoglu, "State-Tribe Relations: Kurdish Tribalism."
[10] Orhonlu, *Osmanlı İmparaorluğu'nda Derbend Teşkilatı*.
[11] Orhonlu, *Osmanlı İmparaorluğu'nda Derbend Teşkilatı*.
[12] Şahin, "1638 Bağdat seferinde zahire nakline memur edilen Yeni- il ve Halep Türkmenleri."
[13] Köksal and Polatel, "A Tribe as an Economic Actor."
[14] Köksal and Polatel, "A Tribe as an Economic Actor," 104.

Unlike in conventional historiography, growing attention is being paid to the roles and agencies of tribal groups in the processes of imperial modernization and centralization. Studies on the frontier regions of the Russian Empire, in particular, have foregrounded the agency and role of frontier peoples as well as provided new methods of studying and understanding tribal organization in the time of imperial modernization. In the case of the Russian Empire, Breyfogles argues that frontier regions are no longer treated as areas of unidirectional Russian settlement with the "new imperial history." Rather, they comprise a "multicultural zone of interaction between Russians and non-Russians, 'strangers' and 'natives'."[15] Virginia Martin, in her work on nineteenth-century Kazak nomads of the southern Russian steppes, argues that these Kazaks "did not passively receive colonial rule [Tsarist Russia], nor violently reject it, but actively worked with it, negotiating for themselves a level of understanding that would ensure the survival of their culture within its confines."[16] Ian W. Campbell also indicates how Kazak intermediaries maintained a degree of intellectual autonomy and agency under the Russian imperial rule rather than completely surrendering to imperial ideology and practice. Campbell argues that as Russian authorities were unfamiliar with the land and people of the steppes, the agency and knowledge of such intermediaries regarding the land, climate, and people of the Kazakh steppes were crucial for Russian rule.[17]

Tribal groups are generally conceived of as monolithic, kinship-based, structurally-stagnant groups. But tribes were neither monolithic entities nor did they remain unchanged. Their contact with empires, markets, and other forms of political and economic organization transformed their structure, size, and internal

[15] Breyfogle, Schrader, and Sunderland, *Peopling the Russian Periphery,* 5.
[16] Martin, "Barimta: Nomadic Custom, Imperial Crime," 265.
[17] Campbell, *Knowledge and the Ends of Empire*, 9.

organization. Moreover, tribes could be nomadic, semi-nomadic, or settled – hierarchical or egalitarian. And their social and political organization changed over time because of contact with imperial powers, the commercialization of agriculture, and variety of other internal and external stimuli. Bernt Glatzer underscores the fact that the egalitarian structure of the Pashtun nomads of Afghanistan turned into a hierarchical one due to the increasing interference of Afghan and British colonial rule in tribal affairs in the nineteenth century. He argues that "the closer the nomad–state relations, the more likely hierarchisation takes place among the nomad groups concerned."[18] Glatzer also states that the egalitarian structure of nomads disappeared when "the state or the colonial authorities directly or indirectly created or strengthened the development of nomads' political institutions in order to facilitate control over them; or the nomads themselves created such institutions in order to be able to react to the state's interference."[19] In a similar way, Lois Beck, in her study of the Qashqai tribal confederation of Iran, argues that several factors led the nomadic tribes of the Middle East to creating hierarchal political organizations including ecological setting, geographical and strategic location, resource base, economic production and exchange, socio-economic stratification, trade routes, competing groups, and state intervention.[20]

Recent studies on the provincial and regional histories of the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire also indicate that the social and political organization of tribes and their economic activities were influenced by a variety of external and internal stimuli. The increase in the infrastructural capacity of the empire following the Tanzimat reforms (1839-1876), the commercialization of agriculture, the

[18] Glatzer, "Political Organization of Pashtun Nomads and the State," 212.
[19] Glatzer, "Political Organization of Pashtun Nomads and the State," 228.
[20] Beck, "Iran and Qashqai Tribal Confederacy," 285.

transformation of the land tenure system, and the process of drawing borders deeply influenced the social and political organization of the tribes as well as their relationship to state circles in an age of imperial modernization and centralization. [21]

1.2 The literature on the Kurdish tribes of the Ottoman Empire

Despite being a study of tribal groups on lands at the intersection of the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires, the greater part of this dissertation concentrates on their relations with the Ottoman Empire. This is because the Kurdish tribes under consideration were gradually integrated into the administrative and fiscal structure of the Ottoman Empire during the second half of the nineteenth century. While the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran tribal confederations were mobile and spanned the lands of the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian empires during the first half of the nineteenth century, large segments migrated to Ottoman imperial domains and accepted Ottoman subjecthood during and after Ottoman, Russian, and Persian attempts to draw borders. Thus, it is necessary to review the literature on the Kurdish tribes of the Ottoman Empire.

In general, studies on Kurdish history in the Ottoman era concentrate on three main periods and largely remain focused on military and political issues.[22] The first period is the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when Ottoman authorities began to conceive of Safavid expansionism as a threat and directed military and political attention on the eastern frontiers. Studies focusing on this period concentrate on the

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[21] This literature is discussed in detail in Chapter 4. For such studies, see Rogan, *Frontiers of state in the late Ottoman Empire*. For the impacts of commercialization of agricultural production on nomadic tribes of South Anatolia, see Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton*. For Syria, see Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 46-57. For Iraq, see Haj, *The Making of Iraq*, *1900-1963,* 22. For the consequences of the application of the Land Code of 1858 in tribal spaces of Iraq, see Jwaideh, "Aspects of Land Tenure and Social Change in Lower Iraq," 333-356. For a discussion on border making process and state-tribe relations, see Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands.*

[22] For a discussion on the impact of contemporary politics in the writing of the history of Armenians and Kurds see Bayraktar and Cora, "'Sorunlar' Gölgesinde Tanzimat."

role of Kurdish dynasties in the integration of Kurdish emirates into the Ottoman imperial realm, to the degree of administrative and fiscal autonomy that these emirates were given, and to their fluctuating alliances and loyalties in course of the Ottoman-Safavid competition and rivalry.[23] Studies on the period from the late seventeenth to the nineteenth century are all but absent. This period is treated as an age when Kurdish dynasties enjoyed broad administrative and fiscal rights with little change to their fiscal and political organization.

The second period is the Tanzimat era (1839-1876) when the Ottoman Empire initiated a series of centralizing reforms in the spheres of administration, taxation, and conscription. As a turning point in the political and fiscal history of the region, the Tanzimat period attracts attention both in and out of academia. Studies of this period concentrate on the disempowerment of centuries-old Kurdish emirates in line with the centralizing reforms of the Ottoman Empire. Several case studies have been written on the elimination of the powerful Botan, Baban, and Soran emirates as well as on a variety of less powerful ones, either through military campaigns or through reforms in the spheres of administration and land tenure.[24]

The third period is the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when religious tensions, ethnic violence, land disputes, and imperial policies were deeply felt in the Ottoman East.[25] Works focusing on this period generally concentrate on

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[23] Ozoglu, "State-Tribe Relations: Kurdish Tribalism."; Tezcan, "The Development of the use of 'Kurdistan' as a Geographical Description."; Murphey, "Resumption of the Ottoman-Safavid Border Conflict, 1603 -1638."

[24] Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Begelerinde Kürtler*; Kardam, *Cizre-Bohtan Beyi Bedirhan*. For more nuanced and critical approaches to Tanzimat period in Ottoman East, see Gündoğan, "The Making of the Modern Ottoman State in the Kurdish Periphery."; Atmaca, "Politics of Alliance and Rivalry on the Ottoman-Iranian Frontier."; Bayraktar, "Yurtluk-Ocaklıks: Land, Politics of Notables and Society."; Duman Koç, "Governing a Frontier Sancak in the Ottoman Empire."; Alanoğlu, "Osmanlı İdâri Sistemi İçerisinde Palu Hükûmeti"

[25] In this dissertation, the term Ottoman East is used in a similar way to its usage in Cora, Derderian, and Sipahi, *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century*, 1. It roughly covers the eastern lands of the Ottoman Empire bordering with Russia and Iran, from Black Sea coast in the north and Levant in the south.

the role of Kurdish tribes in ethno-religious violence and land disputes particularly following their integration into the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments.[26] The bulk of studies also focus on the social engineering and "Turkification" policies of the Committee of Union and Progress [CUP] during the Second Constitutional Period and World War I.[27] Studies of this period also explore the rise of early Kurdish nationalism by focusing on Kurdish newspapers, intellectuals, notable families, and foundations. An important theme in these works is the ideological stance of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Kurdish notables, especially with respect to whether they held a Kurdish nationalist or Ottomanist agenda.[28]

Though there are a large number of political, sociological, and ethnographic studies on Kurdish tribes, the number of historical studies of Kurdish tribes is limited.[29] One dominant view regarding the history of Kurdish tribes is that prior to the Ottoman military campaigns and administrative and fiscal reforms of the mid-nineteenth century, they lived under the subordination and control of the Kurdish emirates/dynasties. From this perspective, the rulers of the emirates, whose political and economic authority was recognized in the Ottoman imperial capital, had some kind of political and military authority over the tribes and clans living in the areas under their jurisdiction. It is also assumed that that Tanzimat reforms (1839-1876), which ended the political and fiscal authority of the Kurdish emirates, created a power vacuum in the region that paved the way for the proliferation of tribes or made

[26] For the studies on the formation of Hamidian cavalries, see Kodaman, "Hamidiye Hafif Süvari Alayları."; Rogan, "Asiret Mektebi."; Klein, *The Margins of Empire*; Jongerden, "Elite Encounters of a Violent Kind."
[27] Kieser, *Iskalanmış Barış*; Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*.
[28] Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman*; Bajalan, *Jön Kürtler*; Duman, "The Formations of the Kurdish Movement(s) 1908-1914."
[29] For the studies on social organization of the pastoral nomadic Kurdish tribes, their migration patterns and summer and winter quarters, see Barth, *Principles of Social Organization in Southern Kurdistan*; Hütteroth, *Bergnomaden und Yaylabauren in Mittel Kurdischen Taurus*; Beşikçi, *Doğu'da Değişim ve Yapısal Sorunlar*; Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State.*

their political agency more evident. This point was first suggested by Wadie Jwaideh. He argues that the suppression and elimination of semi-independent, dynastic Kurdish principalities resulted in lawlessness and disorder. According to him "these petty chieftains, hitherto effectively held in check by the powerful princess, were now at liberty to engage in all forms of lawlessness."[30] The Ottoman response to troublemaker tribes during the Tanzimat era, according to Jwaideh, were episodic punitive expeditions that far from brought permanent order and security to the region.

Martin van Bruinessen, who has produced several works on the social and political organization of Kurdish tribes, defines the process brought about by the Ottoman reforms of the mid-nineteenth century as the "atomization" of the political and social structure of the region. In his view, following the military campaigns and administrative and fiscal reforms of the Ottoman Empire, the complex, state-like structures (emirates) of Ottoman Kurdistan were replaced by simpler, smaller units (tribes and clans).[31] This transformation is called by a variety of other names like "re-clanization," "re-tribalization", and the "rise of the tribes" by various scholars.[32] With reference to increasing banditry by Kurdish tribes, the Tanzimat is also regarded as a period of instability and insecurity; following the elimination of the Kurdish emirates, centrally-appointed officials were effective only in towns and urban centers. Thus, they are assumed to have been unsuccessful in exerting state control over diverse, mobile tribes.[33]

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[30] Jwaideh, *The Kurdish National Movement*, 75.
[31] Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 92, 193.
[32] Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands,* 81-82; Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, 60-62
[33] Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 92; Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, 62; Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands,* 81; Atmaca, "'"Fermanü's-Sultan boş beyne'l-Ekrad": Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Doğusunda Şakiler," 9.

In line with Jwaideh and Bruinessen, David McDowall also defines the Tanzimat era as an age of disorder and lawlessness. McDowall draws attention to the mediating role of the Kurdish emirates in intra-tribal and inter-tribal conflicts in the pre-Tanzimat period. He stresses that "without [the emirates], unrestrained inter-tribal conflicts arose all over Kurdistan, with both political and economic consequences."[34]

Defining the pre-Tanzimat era as an age of stability and security because the Kurdish tribes were under the control of the emirates presents several methodological and historical problems. First, the approach is then over-generalization that is by and large based on impressions of late nineteenth-century European consuls and travelers as well as early Kurdish nationalist intellectuals, who were mostly descendants of pre-Tanzimat Kurdish emirates/dynasties. European consuls and travelers who witnessed the atrocities and assault of Kurdish tribes on Armenian communities in the late nineteenth century romantically portrayed the pre-Tanzimat period as stable.

In the same manner, the newly emerging Kurdish nationalist discourse of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries portrayed "the age of Kurdish emirates" from a romantic perspective as a stable one when unruly Kurdish tribes were under the control of autonomous Kurdish emirates. For instance, *Emir Bedirhan,* written by Ahmed Ramiz in 1907, is one of the earliest examples of this Kurdish nationalist discourse and portrayed the rule of Bedirhan Beg of the Botan Emirate as an age of justice and tranquility.[35] Likewise, the first Kurdish newspaper, *Kurdistan,* which was published by Bedirkhan Pashazades, contains several articles in which the age of

[34] McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 49.
[35] Grubu, *Emir Bedirhan, Lütfi (Ahmed Ramiz) 20. Yüzyılın Başlarında Kürt Milliyetçi Söylemine Bir Örnek*, 33-34. For such an example, see also Bedirxan, "The Kurdish Question, Its Origins and Causes."

emirates was praised while the Hamidian age was criticized because of the lawlessness and insecurity caused by Hamidian tribes. In one article published in the newspaper, titled "Kurds and Armenians" ("*Kürdler ve Ermeniler*"), Abdurrahman Bedirkhan asked rhetorically, "who else carries out the atrocities in Kurdistan but the members of the Hamidiye divisions, who are armed by the sultan and proud of being loyal to him? For example, there is Mustafa Pasha, the head of the Miran tribe, within the borders of the Diyarbekir [province]. He used to be a shepherd ten or fifteen years ago in his tribe, and was called 'Misto the Bald'."[36]

This approach might not be entirely wrong. Several places in the Ottoman East formerly ruled by Kurdish emirates may have been more stable and secure prior to the Tanzimat. Yet taking such stability for granted oversimplifies state-tribe relations. First, it hides the agency and role of Kurdish tribes in the politics of the region before the Tanzimat era. It reduces tribal groups to the status of lawless groups who acted in opposition to order and security. Such an approach also underestimates the mutual dependency of the tribes and Kurdish emirates. Depending on the geographical location of the tribes and their social and economic organization, the relationship between the tribes and the Kurdish emirates was mostly based on mutual interests. It is true that in the classical Ottoman administrative hierarchy, tribes were below emirates. Nevertheless, as discussed in this dissertation, tribes did not live under the unquestioned subordination and control of the emirates in the pre-Tanzimat period; rather, they developed reciprocal fiscal, military, and political relationships with them.

Second, instead of seeing the Tanzimat period as a failure in controlling the tribes, the dissertation shows how Kurdish tribes and Ottoman imperial capital tried

[36] Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, 52.

to benefit from each other fiscally and politically in this frontier space. The extension of Ottoman central rule to the northeastern frontiers of the empire during the Tanzimat era was redefined and shaped by tribal responses, as well as by the nature of an undefined border. Lawlessness and disorder were not necessarily the defining features of the region in the Tanzimat era, and even such cases should be historically contextualized instead of ahistorical explanations. On the northeastern frontiers of the empire, punitive expeditions were generally not an option, not just because they were costly but because of the fear that such expeditions would result in the migration of tribal nomads to either Persian or Russian territories, which would result in a depopulated frontier.

Yonca Köksal's work on Kurdish and Turcoman pastoral nomadic tribes of Central Anatolia brings a nuanced approach to state-tribe relations in the Tanzimat era.[37] Köksal analyzes the methods used by Ottoman bureaucrats to sedentarize the nomads of central Anatolia. She argues that large, nomadic Turkish and Kurdish confederations of Central Anatolia, including the Cihanbeyli, Rişvan, Yeniil, and Afşar tribes were sedentarized either by use of coercion or negotiation with tribal chiefs. According to Köksal, what determined whether coercion or negotiation would be used was geopolitical location, geographical boundedness, and the internal organization of the tribes. She argues that hierarchical, geographically bounded, and geopolitically frontier tribes were generally sedentarized through mediation, while non-hierarchical, scattered, more inland tribes were settled through coercion.[38] Despite the importance of Köksal's work, she uses the term "sedentarization" in a strict sense. Indeed, many central Anatolian pastoral nomadic tribes maintained their mobile lifestyles by adopting the patterns of transhumance. Moreover, Köksal's work

[37] Köksal, "Coercion and Mediation: Centralization and Sedentarization."
[38] Köksal, "Coercion and Mediation: Centralization and Sedentarization," 469.

contextualizes the sedentarization process of the nomads as a largely top-down process initiated by the Ottoman imperial state. She disregards the role of any other factors like the commercialization of agriculture, environmental crises, and the impoverishment of nomads that might have played in their sedentarization.

Janet Klein's work on Kurdish tribes that joined the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments is another well-known work in the field.[39] She regards the formation of the regiments as part of Ottoman state-making, as an institution of internal colonization, and as an Ottoman civilizing mission.[40] Klein argues that the cavalry regiments, which were modeled on Russian Cossacks, were formed to extract a military benefit from the tribal units, to ensure tribal loyalty to the empire, to protect the eastern Ottoman frontiers from a possible Russian incursion, and to check the growing Armenian nationalist movement.[41] She defines the Hamidian period as one of "re-emirization," since Kurdish tribes gained military and political power on account of the official support and patronage given them by the Ottoman sultan, Abdulhamid II.[42] Focusing on the Haydaran, Milli and Miran tribes, Klein indicates how Kurdish tribes that formed the Hamidian cavalry regiments subdued rivals, illegally seized the land and property of the Armenian peasantry, and managed to form large tribal confederations.[43] Land disputes between Armenians and Kurdish tribes, which she defines as an "agrarian question," is among the core subjects of her study.[44] Critiques directed against Klein include her usage of the (British) sources to

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[39] Klein, *The Margins of Empire*.
[40] Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, 9-19.
[41] Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, 20.
[42] Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, 129. The term "re-emirization" is clearly a strong term in defining the process that Kurdish tribes went through during the Hamidian Period. Despite being used by scholars to refer the wealth and power of the tribes, tribal groups of the Hamidian era were not comparable with the "autonomous" pre-Tanzimat Kurdish emirates in terms of their political power, internal organization and even fiscal and administrative immunities.
[43] Klein, *The Margins of Empire*.
[44] Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, 131-136.

which she confined herself, but studies based on Ottoman sources confirm her claims regarding the Kurdish tribes that participated in the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments. The major problem actually resides in her approach to tribal groups. She reduces relations between Armenians and Kurdish tribes to land disputes. Moreover, she pays insufficient attention to the importance of pastoral economy for tribal groups, to their patterns of migration, and to their relations with other tribes and with the Kurdish peasantry.

Gökhan Çetinsaya's work on Ottoman Iraq also draws attention to the Kurdish tribal groups of Mosul in the nineteenth century.[45] Çetinsaya, who adopts the periodization of Bruinessen and McDowall, argues that the Ottoman centralizing reforms of the 1830s – through they ended the semi-autonomous Kurdish emirates – created a power vacuum in the region. Kurdish tribal confederations like the Caf and Hemawend, that were formerly under the control of the Baban Emirate, became independent groups ruled by their own chiefs.[46] According to him, these tribal confederations not only engaged in fierce struggles among themselves but also created security "problems" all along the frontiers of the Ottoman and Persian empires by perpetuating large scale banditry. For Çetinsaya, the power vacuum created by the elimination of Kurdish notables was filled by Kurdish religious (shaikhly) families belonging to the Qadiri and Naqshbandi orders. Families like the Berzenci and the Talabani gradually established influence over these tribes, especially during the Hamidian era.[47]

Erdal Çiftçi's recent doctoral dissertation on the Haydaran tribe is another important contribution to the field of tribal studies, and particularly to the studies on

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[45] Çetinsaya, *Ottoman Administration of Iraq*, 74-86. For a detailed account of the history of Baban Emirate, see Atmaca, "Politics of Alliance and Rivalry on the Ottoman-Iranian Frontier."
[46] Çetinsaya, *Ottoman Administration of Iraq*, 74-75.
[47] Çetinsaya, *Ottoman Administration of Iraq*, 74.

Haydaran tribe.[48] Çiftçi analyzes the history of the Haydaran tribe chronologically over the pre-Tanzimat, Tanzimat, Hamidian, Second Constitutional, and early Republican periods. He indicates how relations between the Haydaran and Ottoman Empire remained consistently fragile on the frontier at every political turn. Contrary to other studies on the Haydaran tribe, he also draws attention to the largely neglected early history of the tribe. Being largely a political history of Haydaran chiefs, his work is less concerned about the environmental setting to which the Haydaran tribe had adapted itself and pastoral production in which they engaged throughout the nineteenth century.

Sabri Ateş, though not directly studying tribes, illustrates how the decisions, loyalties, and agencies of Kurdish tribes on the Ottoman-Persian frontier were critical during the drawing of the Ottoman and Persian boundary. In the words of Ateş, "borderland peoples were not merely swallowed up by the imperial cultures that encroached on them. Instead, they actively participated in, or fought against, the creation of the imperial frontiers and the modern state."[49] Due to the scope of his study, Ateş is more concerned about the role of the tribes in the border making process and pays less attention about how border making influenced the social, political and economic organization of the tribes.

Joost Jongerden's book chapter on the tribal confederation of Milli is a snapshot from the early Constitutional Period.[50] Contrary to the general portrayal of Kurdish tribes engaging in the large-scale massacre of Armenians, he indicates how the chief of the Milli Confederation, İbrahim Pasha, protected Armenians and created a safe zone for them in Viranşehir. Jongerden's work also contextualizes tensions

[48] Çiftçi, "Fragile Alliances in the Ottoman East."
[49] Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands,* 7.
[50] Jongerden, "Elite Encounters of a Violent Kind."

among tribal elites who comprised the Hamidian Regiments (like Ibrahim Pasha of the Milli) and the CUP-affiliated urban elites of Diyarbakır (like Ziya Gökalp and the Pirinççizade family) during the transformation from an imperial state to a nation state.

This dissertation explains the nomadic tribes of Northeastern Anatolia and the Lesser Caucasus in their own terms. It does not treat nomadic tribes merely as political units, but as economic and environmental ones. In other words, the pastoral nomadic Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran tribes are not only considered within the political context to which they adapted themselves in the long nineteenth century. Attention is also paid to their pastoral economy, migration patterns, wintering and summering places, and relations with non-tribal, non-nomadic communities. Instead of focusing on one tribe, this study focuses on three tribal groups, each of which had different social and political organization, pastoral space and relations with outside world. Such a methodology provides a better understanding about tribes of this frontier, as well as imperial policies respective to tribal peculiarities.

Each of the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran tribes had at least 2000 families at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The Zilan was roaming mostly in Ottoman lands of Kars, Bayezid and Persian lands of Revan, the Celali in Ottoman Kars, Bayezid, and Persian Revan and Maku, the Haydaran in Ottoman Bayezid, Van, and Persian Maku and Khoy (See Figure 2 for the map of these nomads and their migration routes). Following the Russian occupation of Khanate of Revan in 1827, they roamed at the intersection of the three rival empires. Among these tribes only the Haydaran did not have wintering or grazing spaces in Russian lands in mass, yet like in the case of Zilan and Celali, the Haydaran tribe also increasingly felt the

Russian military expansion and was in contact with Russian authorities throughout the nineteenth century.

At an age of imperial modernization, centralization and expansionism tribes and empires did not always act as hostile camps on this frontier. The Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires needed the military support of these tribes on the battlefield, their knowledge of the frontier, and their pastoral products for urban consumption. Moreover, the support and loyalty of frontier tribes were also important for imperial powers during the drawing of borders, which made them important actors in frontier regions. Tribes – especially tribal chiefs –, in turn, benefited from imperial support in subduing rivals. Moreover, tribes by accepting the support of the imperial powers tried to increase their control over major pasturing grounds of the frontier.

During the early nineteenth century, Lesser Caucasus and Northeastern Anatolia turned into a triplex confinium,[51] where three rival imperial powers – Ottoman, Persian and Russian Empires - competed for local resources and political domination. A secure, stable and permanent imperial rule at frontiers required the consent and loyalty of local population. Wining the loyalty of the nomadic tribes of the Lesser Caucasus and Northeastern Anatolia, to integrate them into their imperial structures, to benefit from them militarily and economically became enduring state projects for each of these imperial power. Starting from the early nineteenth century, the Russian Empire, as a new actor in the region sought to win the loyalty of the nomadic tribes or at least to keep them neutral during its military expansion in

[51] The term "triplex confinium" has been used to refer the lands at the intersection of the three states/empires. For more information, see Roksandic and Stefanec, Constructing Border Societies on the Triplex Confinium.

Caucasus. Some of these tribes - like some sections of the Zilan in midst nineteenth century - were integrated into the Russian military structure.

The Persian Empire, who lost a great portion of its northern lands to the Russian Empire during the 1810s and 1820s, sought to keep large tribal confederations loyal to itself in its northern and northwestern domains. Like in the Ottoman and Russian cases, Persian authorities engaged in reorganizing the military and fiscal structure of the empire. In the 1810s a modern army of European style was formed in the province of Azerbaijan with the efforts of crown prince Abbas Mirza (1789-1833) in order to cope with the Russian military expansion. Reforming and improving this new army continued during the Mirza Taki Khan's chief ministry (1848-1851).[52] Within such a context, Persian, Turkish and Kurdish tribes of northern and northwestern domains became one of the main source for recruits. Since nomads of the northern sections of the Ottoman-Persian borderland were treated as an untapped source of human power for the military projects, Persian bureaucrats like Abbas Mirza and Mirza Taki Khan claimed the Persian subjecthood of these nomads either militarily (as in the case of the Ottoman-Persian War of 1821-23) or through diplomatic contacts and meetings (like during Erzurum Conferences in 1843-47).

Feeling the Russian and Persian policies as a threat in its northeastern lands, the Ottoman Empire became more concerned about winning the definite loyalty of nomadic pastoral tribes who hitherto used its northeastern lands as grazing grounds during the summers. The Russian military expansion in the northern domains of Persia, the insecurity prevailed in the region, the shortage of pasturing grounds on the Persian side of the border led many nomadic tribes to gradually move into the

[52] Amanat, *Iran, A Modern History*, 251

Ottoman lands. This period was also corresponded to a series of administrative, fiscal and military reforms on the Ottoman side of the border. While welcoming such a human force, the Ottoman central and provincial administration sought to keep these tribes loyal to the empire permanently, if possible to integrate them into the newly forming administrative, military, and fiscal structure.

The Zilan, Celali and Haydaran who roamed the intersection of three rival empires underwent significant transformations in their social, political, and economic organization as well as their patterns and direction of migration during the nineteenth century. The transformation of the Lesser Caucasus and Northeastern Anatolia into a military zone by the Ottoman, Persian and Russian Empires; shifts of imperial boundaries; imperial attempts to integrate, coopt, tax, and conscribe the tribes; and the increasing need for pastoral products in urban centers contributed to the social, economic, and political transformation of nomadic tribes in the nineteenth century. However, these tribes were not entirely subjugated by Ottoman, Persian and Russian imperial powers. Imperial rivalries and policies created new political, military and administrative spaces for these tribes in which they actively participated.

The pastoral tribes of this geography who wandered the intersection of the three imperial powers were always in contact with imperial authorities. Organizing the seasonal migration between winter quarters and summer pastures in Northeastern Anatolia and the Lesser Caucasus, and negotiating the terms of their subjecthood and their fiscal, legal, and military rights and obligations required constant relations with imperial powers. As imperial structures changed as a result of their centralization and modernization, relations between empires and tribal groups also changed tremendously. The role played by the leaders of nomads in negotiations with imperial powers rendered tribal leaders politically more powerful and relatively more

wealthy than other segments of the tribe in the nineteenth century. In other words, increasing contacts between modernizing and centralizing imperial powers with tribes did not gave an end to tribal formations, but rather it strengthened the tribal bonds.

A great portion of this dissertation focuses on state-tribe relations on the Ottoman side of the "border," since starting from 1840s Ottoman authorities paid great care to establish close contacts with these nomads and became more successful in managing the loyalty of these tribes comparing to Russians and Persians. Despite many of these tribes accepted Ottoman subjecthood and gradually began to "settle" in the northeastern lands of the Ottoman Empire, the relations between Ottoman authorities and these tribes largely remained delicate during the second half of the nineteenth century. The possibility of an alliance of these tribes with either Russians or Persians and the contested nature of the borders dividing these empires forced Ottoman authorities to adapt a more accommodative policy regarding these tribes. To gain their loyalty, Ottoman bureaucrats gave short term fiscal and military immunities to the tribes in the midst of the nineteenth century. Tribal chiefs were decorated and paid monthly salaries. Ottoman authorities, despite not willingly also had to confirm the traditional rights of the tribal chiefs on tribal commoners in matters of administration, taxation and application of law. This in the long run enhanced the political authority of tribal chiefs. Contacts between tribes and states took place via the mediation of tribal chiefs, who were also bearing official titles.

This dissertation also indicates how relations between nomadic tribes and outside world changed in response to the transformations in the administrative and fiscal organization of the Ottoman Empire. During the early nineteenth century pastoral nomadic tribes did not deal with agricultural activity and they did not have

well defined wintering spaces. Especially on the Ottoman side of the border, where harsh continental climate dominate, nomads were largely dependent on the peasantry in order to acquire their basic needs for their subsistence as well as requirements of their livestock during the winters. The requirements of nomads and their livestock turned into a great burden on peasantry. Coming to the late nineteenth century, state making and border making processes at the intersection of Ottoman, Persian and Russian Empires led tribes to have permanent, well defined wintering and pasturing spaces in the northeastern lands of the Ottoman Empire. While tribes gradually became "settled," the tensions between peasantry and nomads gained a new dimension. Nomad-peasant conflicts revealed itself as disputes and conflicts on agricultural lands, meadows, villages, and houses.

Another contribution of this dissertation to the literature is that it shows how at an age of imperial modernization and centralization the subjecthood of the borderland peoples largely remained as delicate. Starting from the 1820s, the Ottoman, Persian and Russian Empires applied various strategies to win the loyalty of borderland tribes and to turn these tribes as their subjects. Tribes having thousands of families and large amounts of livestock negotiated the terms of their subjecthood – like how much tax to be paid, how many man to be given to army, the limits of the traditional rights of the chiefs on tribal commoners– with imperial centers. Thus, the making of the subjecthood of the borderland tribes was also a bottom up process in which tribes actively participated.

An important space is given to sheep production and its trade by tribal groups. Since meat demand in urban centers increased tremendously during the nineteenth century as a result of growing urban population, pastoral tribes increasingly involved in its production and trade. Being an important item of

commerce, the production and trade of sheep affected every sphere of life. It was one of the main source of inter-tribal conflict over main grazing grounds, since large flocks of sheep required large pasturelands. The protection and care of the large flocks of sheep during the winters increased tensions between nomads and the peasantry. Being among the rare commercial items of the region, it was also a source of cash for merchants, tax farmers and tribal chiefs. Because of its commercial importance, it was the main target of plunderers, thieves and etc. Yet, it was also an important item to solve the disputes among the tribes. It was the sheep to that was paid as blood money (*diyet)* to resolve tribal conflicts.

1.3 Sources of the study

This dissertation is primarily based on Ottoman and British archives as well as a variety of traveler accounts. For the first half of the nineteenth century, I mainly used sources available in the Catalogue of Hatt-ı Hümâyun of the Ottoman Archives. Hatt-ı Hümâyun documents, which present the ideas of provincial governors, also sometimes include the comments of the sultan and the divan (Imperial Council).[53] Thus, they often divulge multiple views on the same subject. Ottoman archival sources are supported by a series of travelogues. The accounts of James Morier, James B. Fraser, Otto Blau, and James Brant on their travels vividly describe the mobile pastoral tribes at the intersection of the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires as well as their military and political relations with these three imperial powers.

For the second half of the nineteenth century, the Meclis-i Vala, İrâde, Dahiliye, Hariciye, and Yıldız Catalogues of the Ottoman Archives have been used.

[53] Esmer, "A Culture of Rebellion," 28-29

Among these, documents of the Meclis-i Vala (Supreme Council) are prominent. Founded in 1838, the Supreme Council became an important institution in the implementation and supervision of Tanzimat reforms.[54] It thus includes a great volume of documents regarding the vision and policies of Ottoman reformist bureaucrats regarding tribal groups. Sources in the Hariciye Catalogue are also informative. Documents written by Ottoman consuls in Iran reveal how border-crossing migration and the multiple loyalties of the tribes were perceived by Persian authorities. Sources in İrâde Catalogue importantly reflect the decisions of the imperial center regarding policies to be implemented in the region.

Consular reports in British archives date back to the 1840s. Especially the British consul of Erzurum, James Brant, who was in continuous contact with the governors of Erzurum, provides important insight into the tribal policy of the Ottoman Empire in the 1840s. Consul Brant's reports are also informative with respect to social and economic life as well as environmental calamities (epidemics, droughts, and locust swarms) that took place in the province of Erzurum. Annual trade reports available in the British archives are also highly informative about economic life as well as the circulation of goods and commodities within and from the region. The parts of the dissertation on pastoral production by tribal groups as well as the export of sheep from the provinces of Erzurum and Van are mostly based on British archives.

Two books, written in the mid-nineteenth century are referred to frequently in this work. The first, *Seyâhatnâme-i Hudud*, is a work by Mehmed Hurşid Pasha, an Ottoman statesman who worked as a member of the commission formed to resolve

[54] Seyitdanlıoğlu, *Tanzimat Devrinde Meclis-i Valâ (1838-1868)*.

border disputes between the Ottoman and Persian Empires. The second, *Adat û Rusûmatnameê Ekradiye,* was written by Mela Mehmûde Bayezidi, a Kurdish religious scholar and a native of the Bayezid Sanjak of the Ottoman Empire. These two works introduce important information about the size, organization, summering and wintering places, and the cultural codes of the Kurdish tribes on this frontier. Yet, they are also important because they are the products of two different – if not opposing – worlds. Hurşid Pasha's work exemplifies the views and policies of a reformist Ottoman bureaucrat with the agenda of integrating tribal groups into the Ottoman administrative structure. Melâ Mehmûdê Bayezidi's work, on the other hand, is written from a local – if not directly tribal – perspective and provides insight into the cultural and social codes of the tribes and their roles in the political decisions that involved them.

1.4 Methodology and chapter outline

This dissertation is based on cases selected from three tribal confederations of the region. It is both chronologically and thematically organized. Each chapter problematizes a different question regarding pastoral nomadic tribes, their relations with imperial states, and their changing economic, political, and social organization.

The second chapter discusses pastoralism, nomadism, and tribalism since these terms are used frequently in this dissertation. After presenting the different types of pastoral nomadism adopted by various tribal groups and communities, it discusses the migration patterns, directions, seasons, and main wintering and grazing places of the nomads of Northeastern Anatolia and the Lesser Caucasus in the first half of the nineteenth century. The second part of this chapter presents a discussion

of the origin, size, and internal organization, of these tribes at the time. This chapter serves as an introductory chapter for the following chapters.

The third chapter is about the transformation of Northeastern Anatolia and the Lesser Caucasus into a military zone by the Ottoman, Russian, and Persian Empires in the early nineteenth century and the varying repercussions of this transformation for tribal groups. After describing the political configuration of the region in the early nineteenth century, it analyzes how wars among the Russian, Ottoman, and Persian Empires between 1820 and 1830 affected the tribes of this region in different respects. Three cases are examined. The case of the Haydaran indicates how tribes along this frontier used their mobility as an advantage to avoid wars and conscription and taxation by authorities of the imperial powers on the frontier. The case of the Zilan exemplifies how the same wars and border policies led to the gradual fragmentation of a large tribal borderland confederation. The case of the Celali shows how the same wars and border politics disrupted the pastoral ecology of the nomads and pushed them into the banditry.

The fourth chapter is about the processes of Ottoman state making and border drawing during the Tanzimat period (1839-1876) and their implications for mobile pastoral tribes at the intersection of the Ottoman, Russian, and Persian Empires. After describing Ottoman reforms being carried out in the spheres of administration, taxation, and military organization, it discusses the contours of Ottoman "tribal policy" in general during the early Tanzimat era, and in particular in its eastern frontiers.

Chapter five argues that Ottoman tribal policy during the Tanzimat era was redefined in practice at local level. By focusing on the case of the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran whose subjecthood was at dispute between Ottoman and Persian Empires,

it shows how Ottoman tribal policy in the region was deeply intertwined with the process of drawing the borders of the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires. On one hand, this chapter discusses the Ottoman's ways of coopting tribal formations into its administrative structure and turning tribal members into imperial subjects. On the other, it shows how tribal leaders negotiated the terms of their subjecthood and their position in the Ottoman world. This chapter indicates how the making of the subjecthood of the tribes did not merely remain as a top down process, rather it based on a bargaining process between imperial capital and tribes.

Chapter six argues that increasing contact with the Ottoman imperial state and the commercialization of pastoral production from the 1860s onward resulted in territorialization and the stratification of the tribes along the northeastern frontiers of the empire. It indicates how the delegation of power to tribal chiefs in the matters of taxation and administration together with the commercialization of pastoral production influenced tribal groups, strengthened their social, economic, and political stratification, and also led to their territorialization. In line with this argument, I focus on conflicts over pastureland, agricultural land, and villages among tribes and between tribes and peasants.

Chapter seven is the concluding one. It formulates a general analysis of how state-tribe encounters and other factors brought differing outcomes to pass for each of these tribes. Even though each of these tribes became territorial and highly stratified by the end of the nineteenth century, they had followed different trajectories. This chapter also provides some discussion for further research in the field of tribal studies.

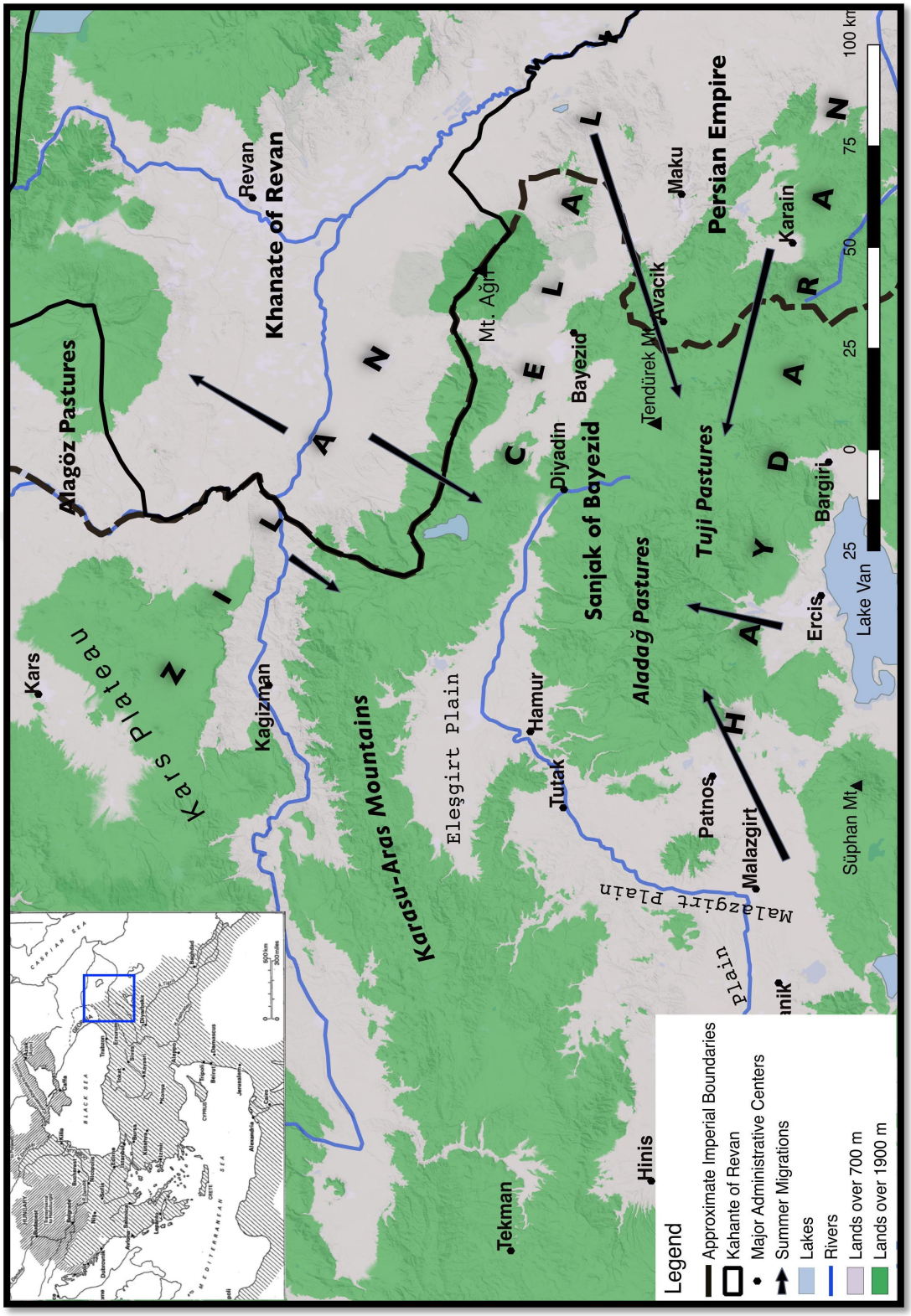

Figure 2. Map of physical geography and migration of nomads
Source: [Made with QGIS, For boundaries of the Khanate of Revan, I have benefited from Bournoutian, "Eastern Armenia on the Eve of the Russian Conquest," 21, 38, 60, The small map in the corner is extracted from the map in Inalcık and Quataert, *An Economic and Social*, xxxvii]

CHAPTER 2

DEFINING PASTORALISM, NOMADISM AND TRIBALISM

Historically speaking, nomadic pastoral tribes have adapted themselves to different ecological, political, and economic conditions, resulting in the emergence of different types of social and political organization, economic activity, migration regimes, and relations among pastoral nomadic populations. This not only rarifies the existence of a universally-accepted definition of pastoral nomadism but prevents a sharp categorization of its typologies. The term "pastoral nomadic tribe" implies three different forms of economic, social, and political existence: animal husbandry as a mode of economic activity, mobility as a spatial movement, and tribalism as a form of political and social organization.[55] In many parts of the nineteenth-century Ottoman East these three forms coexisted. Since these three terms will be frequently used in this dissertation, the social, political, and economic conditions to which they refer needs explanation. The first part of this chapter discusses how "pastoralism" and "nomadism" have been defined in the literature starting in the twentieth century. Then, in light of this literature, the general characteristics of nomadic pastoralism among the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran tribes of Northeastern Anatolia and the Lesser Caucasus during the first half of the nineteenth century are discussed. The third part, on the other hand, focuses on the third component: tribalism. It presents a discussion of the internal organization, composition, and size of these three tribes over the same period.

[55] For a discussion on the terms of "nomadism," "pastoralism," and "tribalism" see Tapper, "Introduction," 7-8; Salzman, "Pastoral Nomads: Some General Observations," 245-246.

2.1 Defining pastoralism and nomadism

Although the primary objective of this dissertation is the study of pastoral nomadic tribes, not all pastoral nomadic communities are tribal with respect to their social and political organization. Most transhumant communities of Continental Europe, including the nineteenth-century Ottoman Balkans, generally had non-tribal social and political organizations. Peasant families who, along with their animals, migrated seasonally between the Adriatic coasts and the mountains of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the nineteenth century were non-tribal pastoralists.[56] The Vlachs of Thessaly, who were mobile pastoralists alternated between the slopes of the Northern Pindus and the plains of Thessaly and Macedonia, were non-tribal.[57] Likewise, not all nomads are pastoral with respect to their economic activity.[58] Historically speaking, spatially mobile peoples have engaged in different kinds of economic activity like hunting and gathering, trade, and transportation. Peripatetic societies, also known as service nomads, are an example of non-pastoral nomadic societies.[59] Similarly, pastoralism as an economic activity is not peculiar to nomadic tribal societies. Sedentary populations also engaged in animal husbandry as either their main or a supplementary economic activity. The third term elaborated upon in this chapter, "tribe," has been used interchangeably with the term "nomad" for many parts of the Ottoman Empire and Middle East.[60] Yet tribes can be exclusively pastoral and nomadic, or they can be agrarian and sedentary, or they can adopt a partly-mobile lifestyle involving both cultivation and animal husbandry.

Since the early twentieth century, various criteria – such as the degree of

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[56] Matley, "Transhumance in Bosnia and Herzegovina," 235.
[57] Yusufoğlu, "Agrarian Relations and Estate (Çiftlik) Agriculture," 60-70.
[58] Barth, "A General Perspective on Nomad-Sedentary Relations in the Middle East," 11; Salzman, "Pastoral Nomads: Some General Observations," 246-247.
[59] Rao, *The Other Nomads: Peripatetic Minorities*.
[60] Tapper, "Anthropologists, Historians, and Tribespeople," 54.

engagement in a certain economic activity, the existence or nonexistence of permanent settlements, migration cycles, seasons, and directions, the physical geography to which nomads adapted themselves, the number of persons engaged in migration, and the composition of herds owned by nomads – have been taken into consideration by scholars when defining pastoral nomadism and its various forms.[61] Definitions and classifications have been purely economic, environmental, or political or a combination of these three approaches. This dissertation disputes rigid categorizations of pastoral nomadism and instead discusses how certain concepts have been utilized by scholars while defining pastoral nomadism. This enables a better understanding of the patterns of pastoral nomadism in Northeastern Anatolia and Lesser Caucasus. Thus, the next part presents how pastoral nomadism has been defined and used in the literature. Then I elucidate the peculiarities of pastoralism among the tribes of Zilan, Celali and Haydaran in the early nineteenth century.

2.1.1 The type of economic activity and degree of mobility

When defining pastoral nomadism and its forms, several scholars take into consideration the degree of economic activity and the mobility patterns that nomads adopted. Philippe Arbos, in his study of pastoral nomads of Continental Europe, postulates three historical forms of pastoralism: nomadism, transhumance, and pastoral life in mountainous areas.[62] Nomadism, according to him, is when an entire human group and their herds engaged in vertical and horizontal migrations. Nomads in this category are mobile throughout the year and partake in no agricultural production.[63] In transhumance, animals are herded by shepherds, but the remaining

[61] For a discussion on conceptualism of nomadism, see Salzman, "Political Organization among Nomadic Peoples"
[62] Arbos, "The Geography of Pastoral Life," 559.
[63] Arbos, "The Geography of Pastoral Life," 561-562.

population maintains a mostly sedentary lifestyle. Transhumant communities of the early twentieth-century Pyrenees, Alps, and Carpathians adopted seasonal vertical migrations between lowlands and highlands and benefited from the differing climatic zones and vegetation shaped by the variations in altitude. Transhumance, according to Arbos, was the most widespread type of pastoralism in Europe in early twentieth century.[64] The third type is adopted by pastoral nomads in mountainous areas in which movements take place between lower and higher slopes. Pastoral communities in mountain zones keep animals in stables during cold, snowy winters, but drive their animals to high, mountain pastures in summer. As in the case of transhumance, not all the community participates in these migrations.[65]

A remarkably similar classification was drawn up by Elizabeth E. Bacon for the nomads of Central and Southwest Asia. Bacon proposes three forms of pastoral life: true nomads, semi-nomads, and semi-sedentary groups.[66] According to her, "true" nomads are mobile and travel along with their dwellings throughout the year in search of pastures and water, and they do not engage in agriculture. "Semi-nomads," however, engage in some cultivation before starting their seasonal migrations, but they generally live in portable or temporary dwellings. Semi-sedentary groups "dwell in permanent villages during a part of the year, where they engage in cultivation and move out in tents only during one season of the year."[67]

Anatoly Khazanov, focusing on a much larger geography, points to several types of pastoralism around the world based on ecological and physical variations.[68] Like Arbos and Bacon, he argues that nomadic pastoralism is characterized by a

[64] Arbos, "The Geography of Pastoral Life," 562-567.
[65] Arbos, "The Geography of Pastoral Life," 567-569.
[66] Bacon, "Types of Pastoral Nomadism."
[67] Bacon, "Types of Pastoral Nomadism," 54.
[68] Khazanov, *Nomads and Outside World*.

specialization in animal husbandry and the absence of agriculture. Semi-nomadic pastorals engage in extensive pastoralism but supplement it with agricultural activity.[69] In semi-sedentary pastoralism, animal husbandry is carried out on a seasonal basis, but the role of agriculture is predominant in their general economic activity. Moreover, compared to semi-nomadic pastorals, migrations are generally shorter in time and distance.[70] Khazanov lists a variety of other types of pastoralism including herdsmen husbandry (or transhumance in Europe), *yaylak* (summer quarter) pastoralism, sedentary animal husbandry, and a variety of subtypes depending on ecological and regional differences.[71]

The definition and typologies of nomadism introduced by Arbos, Bacon, and Khazanov are based on two main criteria: economic activity and mobility. According to these scholars, "pure" nomads are those who engage exclusively in animal husbandry and adopt a mobile lifestyle throughout the year. These are the main criteria that distinguish pastoral nomadism from other types of communities that deal in animal husbandry. The degree of mobility and engagement in agricultural activity, on the other hand, are explained with terms like semi nomadism, transhumance, semi sedentarism, and herdsmen husbandry.

2.1.2 Physical geography and directions of migrations

Several other scholars, on the other hand, pay attention to other parameters in their classifications – especially to the ecology of pastoral nomadism and the physical geography to which nomads adapted themselves. Climatic changes, especially the ranges of temperature and precipitation shaped by different altitudes and latitudes,

[69] Khazanov, *Nomads and Outside World*, 19.
[70] Khazanov, *Nomads and Outside World*, 21.
[71] Khazanov, *Nomads and Outside World*, 22-24.

are the main factors taken into consideration by these scholars. In Thomas Barfield's classification, for instance, ecology plays the primary role.[72] His classification is based on interactions among animals, the land, climate, and people. According to him there are five distinct pastoral zones in the old world. The first lay south of the Sahara where cattle dominate the composition of the herds. Besides cattle, these nomads also raised sheep and goats in their subsistence economy, while donkeys were raised for transportation. The nomads of the second zone, the Saharan and Arabian deserts, specialized in camels. Since camels can migrate long distances without water, camel breeding nomads can exploit distant desert lands that are inaccessible to other kinds of livestock. According to Barfield, the third zone lay between the Central Eurasian Steppes and the arid deserts. The Mediterranean basin, the Anatolian and Persian plateaus, and the mountains of Central Asia comprise this third zone. Nomads of these lands migrated in a mostly vertical direction, benefited from different climatic zones shaped by the variation in altitude, and bred various animals like goats, sheep, cattle, horses, camels, and donkeys. Barfield accentuates that historically, nomads of this zone had more symbiotic relations with sedentary populations. As discussed in the following lines, the nomads subject to this dissertation belonged to the third zone. The forth zone was the Eurasian steppe pastoral zone, which was dominated by horse breeding nomads. Sheep, goats, cattle, and camels were other animals that comprised the herd composition of these nomads. The fifth zone was the high-altitude Tibetan pastures characterized by harsh climatic conditions. In this zone, nomads bred mostly yaks but also sheep, goats, horses, and cattle.[73]

Other than the pastoral ecology to which nomads adapt themselves, some

[72] Barfield, *The Nomadic Alternative*.
[73] Barfield, *The Nomadic Alternative*, 7-9.

scholars propose classifications on the basis of the nomads' patterns and directions of migration, which are shaped by concern for utilizing different climatic zones by engaging in seasonal vertical and horizontal migrations. Douglas L. Johnson and Wolf Dieter Hütteroth, for instance, take the role of physical geography into consideration, underscoring two different migration regimes among pastoral nomads of Southwest Asia and North Africa. Vertical migrations generally take in mountainous areas where in different seasons nomads benefit from different climate zones shaped by the variation in altitudes. Horizontal migrations, on the other hand, take place in open, flat steppes where nomads move in search of grass and water. [74]

Transhumance is a pattern of seasonal vertical migration. In this pattern, one main concern of the pastoralists is to benefit from different climatic zones by engaging in seasonal, vertical migrations between lowlands and highlands – or between the lower and higher slopes of mountains. Given the various climatic zones of Europe, the patterns of transhumance diverge to a great extent. Elwyn Davies states two patterns of transhumance on the European continent: Alpine and Mediterranean.[75] He articulates that the Alpine pattern of transhumance, which is dominant in the Pyrenees, Alps, and Carpathians, mostly revolve around cultivation. That is to say, the movement of animals to Alpine pasturing grounds during the summer is predicated by the need to clear lower-lying land for cultivation. Davies argues that one defining feature of Alpine transhumance is that animals are kept in stables during the winter and are fed hay and straw collected during the summer. Thus, agricultural production is carried out to supplement animal husbandry during

[74] L. Johnson, "The Nature of Nomadism."; Hütteroth, *Bergnomaden und Yaylabauren in Mittel Kurdischen Taurus*.
[75] Davies, "The Patterns of Transhumance in Europe," 155.

the winter.[76] This pattern is also known as *Alpwirtschaft* in Europe.[77]

The schemes of Mediterranean transhumance, on the other hand, are shaped exclusively by climatic conditions. In this pattern, animals are driven to favorable mountainous pastures in summer because the grass in the lowlands becomes parched. During winter, the lowland pastures revive because of temperate, rainy conditions and the mountainous areas become inhospitable for animals. Thus, nomads move to the low-lying plains in winter.[78]

Several scholars warn about using the term transhumance in a non-European context.[79] Scholars even differentiate between transhumance and pastoral nomadism. Fernand Braudel argues that European transhumance differs from pastoral nomadism in several respects as it involves permanent settlements in the lowlands and a degree of agricultural activity.[80] Douglas L. Johnson underscores the Eurocentric connotation of the term "transhumance" and the problems that derive from its usage in a non-European context. L. Johnson asserts that transhumance is a Eurocentric term that describes a spatially limited pattern of movement in mountainous areas that was first observed in the Alpine regions of Europe.[81] In a similar vein, E. Estyn Evans argues that "the movements of flocks and herds under transhumance are seasonal and altitudinal; they take place to and from an established settlement, which is regarded as the permanent home."[82] These permanent settlements are never entirely abandoned, and only a small segment of the community is concerned with

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[76] Davies, "The Patterns of Transhumance in Europe," 155.
[77] Kreutzmann, "Pastoral Practices and Their Transformation," 56-57.
[78] Davies, "The Patterns of Transhumance in Europe," 155.
[79] Jones, "Transhumance Re-Examined," 358; Cleary, "Patterns of Transhumance in Languedoc," 25-26.
[80] Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World*, II, 87-88. See also Khazanov, *Nomads and Outside World*, xxxvii
[81] L. Johnson, "The Nature of Nomadism." For a similar critique see Kreutzmann, "Pastoral Practices in Transition: Animal Husbandry in High Asian Contexts," 8.
[82] Evans, "Transhumance in Europe," 172.

the care of animals. The larger part of the population, on the other hand, deals with cultivation in the villages.[83]

2.1.3 A critique of categorization

Terms like pastoral nomadism, semi-nomadism, transhumance make it easier to organize studies, yet these terms are not always explanatory as regional variations have resulted in the emergence of differing patterns. There are many variables that shape the patterns of nomadism, the direction of migration, the seasons, nomad-peasant relations, the degree and type of economic activity, and even the type of animals raised. Climate zones, the political setting, geopolitical borders, proximity to urban capitals, trade roads and centers, the availability of arable land, and cultural codes have all contributed to the emergence of a variety of patterns among nomads. Even minor, regional differences have contributed to the emergence of new patterns and relations among nomads. Richard Tapper criticizes Khazanov for presenting a narrow definition of pastoral nomadism. He argues that Khazanov's definition and categorization of pastoral nomadism is strictly economic and does not take variables like culture, religion, and symbolism into consideration.[84] Philip Carl Salzman argues that the absence or presence of agriculture is a too crude a detail to distinguish between nomadism and semi-nomadism since it is dubious to argue that nomads are entirely non-agricultural.[85] L. Johnson further argues that "along this continuum, an infinite variety of different forms of nomadism with varying combinations of animal

[83] Similar definitions have been made by different scholars, See Cleary, "Patterns of Transhumance in Languedoc," 25-26.
[84] Tapper, "Nomads and the Outside World by A. M. Khazanov and Julia Crookenden," 244-245.
[85] Salzman, "Political Organization among Nomadic Peoples," 117.

husbandry and agriculture could be found, each adjusted to particular conditions in specific places at definite points in time."[86]

Categorization of pastoral nomadism on the basis of economic activity is difficult given the close relations between nomads and the peasantry. The nomadic pastoral economy is not self-sufficient. In one way or another, pastoral nomads are dependent on the outside world, especially on sedentary cultivators, in order to assure their basic subsistence needs. The needs for agricultural commodities for their daily diet, craft commodities for daily use, and even shelter, hay, and food for their livestock when pastures are not available force nomads to develop a symbiotic relationship with peasantry. Sedentary populations need nomads not only for their pastoral products but also for their pack animals for trade and for their manpower as soldiers or wage laborers. In Middle East, where nomadic and settled populations lived in close proximity to each other, it is particularly difficult to argue that nomads were isolated communities. W.W Swidler argues that nomads in the Middle East are always in contact with other nomads as well as with villages, markets, and towns. Thus, there is always a relation between "stock and grain, between grazing and cultivation, between the desert and the sown."[87]

In coming chapters, this dissertation shows how nomadic tribes of Northeastern Anatolia and the Lesser Caucasus had to develop close political and economic relations with governors, urban capitals, and the peasantry of their regions to provide for the basic requirements of their animals – like shelter, hay, and straw – as well as their own housing and agricultural foods for their daily diet. Frontier governors, urban capitals, and the peasantry also needed nomads in terms of their human power and pastoral products. The Ottoman, Persian and Russian Empires also

[86] L. Johnson, "The Nature of Nomadism," 17.
[87] Swidler, "Adaptive Processes Regulating Nomad-Sedentary Interaction," 23.

needed the military power of the nomads during imperial conflicts in the nineteenth century. Coming chapters discuss how the cities of Aleppo, Damascus, Istanbul, and Cairo depended on the pastoral economy of these tribes since nomads provided sheep to these cities. Moreover, it is mistaken to assume that nomads never engaged in agricultural production. Indeed, the need for agricultural commodities compelled many nomads to engage partly in cultivation. For instance, Douglas argues that in the Near East, some nomadic pastoral tribes or some subdivisions of them cultivated favorable land to supply their basic agricultural needs.[88] Bacon also states that semi-nomads of Southwest Asia who cultivated crops were potentially self-sufficient.[89] The nomadic tribes that are the subject of this dissertation – the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran – were mostly involved in animal husbandry before the second half of the nineteenth century, and yet, though small in number, some groups among them settled and were involved with agricultural production, as is elaborated upon later.

Another problem resides in the use of terminology. Scholars like Braudel, Johnson, Evans and Khazanov are critical of the use of the term transhumance in a non-European setting, yet the patterns of European transhumance resemble vertical forms of pastoral nomadism in many other parts of the world including the Middle East, Persia, the Himalayas, and the Caucasus. Davies, for example, states that the pattern of Mediterranean transhumance resembles the patterns of nomadism in North Africa and Arabia.[90] As is introduced in the ensuing pages, this pattern further resembles the patterns of pastoral nomadism adopted by the Bozulus and Karaulus tribes of the sixteenth century and the Alikan, Reşkotan, and Penceran tribes of the nineteenth century in the Ottoman Empire who engaged in seasonal migrations

[88] L. Johnson, "The Nature of Nomadism," 11-12.
[89] Bacon, "Types of Pastoral Nomadism," 46.
[90] Davies, "The Patterns of Transhumance in Europe," 156.

between winter quarters in the Upper Tigris River basin and summer grazing lands in the Anatolian Highlands. Philip Karl Salzmann accentuates the fact that the seasonal movement of the Basseri tribe of Southern Persia can be called one of "grand transhumance."[91] Lawrence Krader further argues that "a common form of stock raising in transhumance is found in many parts of Eurasia in an interrelated series of mountain chains from the Pyrenees in the west to the Alps, the Tyrol, the Balkans, the Caucasus, the Elburz, the Hindu Kush, and as far as the Himalayas."[92]

A sharp definition and rigid categorization of pastoral nomadism is not the intent of this dissertation, though, as the following chapters discuss, the degree of pastoral and agricultural activity undertaken by a tribal entity shapes not only these pastoral nomads' relations with sedentary populations but also their political and social organization. In light of these discussions, this dissertation uses the term pastoral nomads to refer to communities whose economic activity is exclusively based on animal husbandry and who engage in seasonal migrations between grazing lands and winter quarters. For cases when cultivation is a more widespread economic supplement to animal husbandry, this dissertation prefers the term semi nomadic or transhumant depending on the tribal groups. Yet even in the early twentieth century, following the sedentarization campaign of the Ottoman Empire, many from among these three tribes maintained an entirely nomadic, pastoral lifestyle. In following sections, I will present a detailed account of the patterns of pastoral nomadism among the tribes of Zilan, Celali and Haydaran.

[91] Salzman, "Pastoral Nomads: Some General Observations," 251-252.
[92] Krader, "The Ecology of Nomadic Pastoralism," 500.

2.2 Pastoralism in Northeastern Anatolia and Lesser Caucasus

Though the patterns of nomadic pastoralism in northeastern Anatolia and Lesser Caucasus do not exactly conform to any of the aforementioned typologies, they share many characteristics with almost all of them. Pastoral nomads of the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran mostly adopted short distance, vertical, seasonal migrations between the lowlands and highlands of the region situated at the intersection of the Ottoman, Russian and Persian Empires during the first half of the nineteenth century. This pattern bears the general characteristics of the European transhumance. However, unlike the transhumants of the European continent, Kurdish nomads of the first half of the nineteenth century had little or no knowledge of agricultural activity and had no well-defined permanent settlements. Thus, these nomads mostly depended on the outside world for the requirements of their animals (hay, straw, and stables) during cold, snowy winters. This dependence manifest itself not only as a barter or exchange between the nomads and peasantry but turned into an exploitation of the peasantry by nomadic populations. Moreover, during the first half of the nineteenth century, unlike European transhumance, almost the entire members of the each tribe were mobile with the flock between winter quarters and summer pastures. Before discussing the characteristics of the pastoral nomadism of these tribes in detail, it is necessary to provide a general description and climate of the region since these factors clearly shaped the patterns of pastoral nomadism and nomad-peasant relations.

2.2.1 Physical geography

Compared to surrounding regions, the northeastern frontier of the Ottoman Empire – Erzurum, Kars, and Ağrı in modern Turkey – is at a higher elevation.[93] These districts are a high flatland mostly above the elevation of 1800 meters.[94] The altitude rises to over 3000 meters in mountain chains and volcanic ascensions. To the north, the region borders the low-lying Aras Valley. To the south, from the west of Lake Van to the Persian frontier, the land is intersected by several volcanic masses such as Nemrut, Süphan, Aladağ, Tendürek, and Ağrı, the last of which is the highest peak in modern Turkey. Further south, the Taurus mountain ranges divide the region from the Upper Mesopotamian plains.

At several points this high flatland is cut by depressions, yet the majority of these depressions are still higher than most of the highlands of surrounding regions. One of these depressions starts with the plain of Erzurum and, in an easterly direction, continues through the plains of Pasinler and Horosan. Another depression starts with the plain of Muş (1300 m) and, in a northeastly direction, continues through the plains of Bulanık (1400), Malazgirt (1600), Patnos (1650), and Eleşgirt (1600). To the south, between the Aladağ mountain chain and the northern shores of Lake Van are the plains of Adilcevaz, Erciş, and Bargiri. Settlements and agricultural activity are generally concentrated in and around these low-lying plains.[95] The agricultural activity, which is dominated by grain production, is mostly carried out in these plains due to high altitude and continental climate. During the nineteenth century, the major agricultural products of these plains were barley, wheat, millet,

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[93] H.F.B Lynch is among the first travelers who provided a detailed analyses of the physical feature of this geography, see Lynch, *Armenia Travels and Studies*, 2.
[94] During the first half of the nineteenth century Erzurum, Muş, Bitlis, Kars, Bayezid, and Çıldır were administrative divisions of the greater Province of Erzurum. British Consul of Erzurum, James Brant argues that the region was covering an area of 1200 square miles. See FO 78/1669.
[95] Erinç, *Doğu Anadolu Coğrafyası,* 42-43.

and rye. In the lowland plains of Erzurum and Muş, limited amounts of cotton, rice, and tobacco were produced in addition to grains.[96]

Despite micro-climatic variations, the dominant climate of the region is a continental one. In most districts of Erzurum, especially those over 1800 meters of elevation, the winters are generally cold and snowy and last almost six months of the year. The duration is shorter in lowlands, yet even these regions are cold and covered with snow most of the winter. The summers, on the other hand, are generally hot and arid, but compared to Western Iran, Central Anatolia, and Upper Mesopotamia, the region receives more rain (over 400 millimeters annually). Between Van and Kars in the north, the amount of rain increases. Indeed, the Kars-Ardahan region receives more than 500 millimeters of rain during the summer. Melting snows and summer rains provide excellent pasturing grounds. Most of the region is covered by Alpine or sub-Alpine meadows.

Due to its high elevation and abundant pasturing grounds, the region has always been a more suitable environment for a pastoral than an agricultural economy. The abundance of mountain pastures and meadows attracted several pastoral nomadic tribes from the Upper Tigris River basin and from Northwestern Iran and was a grazing site for local semi-nomadic and transhumant communities throughout history. The relatively mild, fertile lowland plains, on the other hand, were the sites of settlements as well as agricultural production. During the nineteenth century, the plains of Muş, Eleşgirt, Erciş, and Adilcevaz, which are often mentioned in this dissertation, were occupied by agrarian communities and also the main wintering places of the nomads.

[96] Foreign Office 78/1669.

2.2.2 Patterns of pastoral nomadism

Despite being favorable for summer grazing, the landscape of the northeastern Ottoman Empire is not suitable for winter grazing due to the harsh continental climate. During long, cold, snowy winters, the local peasantry of Erzurum, Kars, Bayezid, and Van keeps and feeds their animals indoors – a pattern that has been practiced for centuries. Wilkinson argues that

> Clearly, pastoral resources played an important role in the lands of Urartu, but precisely how the inhabitants managed such large flocks and herds during the harsh winters remains less understood. Observations by Xenophon in the fifth century B.C. and by the nineteenth century travelers suggest that the village animals were wintered underground or in houses, where they could have been fed on forage supplied by cultivated lands.[97]

Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, nomadic pastoral tribes that used this landscape for summer grazing had two options or strategies during the cold, snowy winters. The first was to migrate to the milder plains of the Upper Tigris River basin where the climate was favorable in winter. The second option was to spend the winters in the lowlands of the Ottoman province of Erzurum where the nomads would keep their animals in stables or in Persian Revan and Khoy, where winters were milder than Erzurum. The Zilan tribe adopted both patterns in the course of its history. While in the sixteenth century they were seasonally mobile between the Upper Tigris River basin and the northeastern Anatolian highlands, sometime between late sixteenth and mid-eighteenth century they abandoned this pattern and began to spend winters in the villages of Erzurum, or milder regions of Persian Revan and Khoy. The following paragraphs pay special heed to these two patterns of pastoral nomadism.

[97]Wilkinson, *Archaeological Landscapes of the Near East,* 197.

2.2.2.1 The long distance vertical migrations

According to the Köppen Climate Classification, the climate of the lowlands of the Upper Tigris River basin[98] is characterized by dry, hot summers but relatively mild winters.[99] Unlike Northeastern Anatolia, the temperature and precipitation in the Upper Tigris River basin not only allows for grazing in the winter but also provides a mild environment for the tent-dwelling nomads. Moreover, because of the favorable climatic conditions of Upper Tigris River basin, the pastoral nomads of the region were less dependent on the outside world in winter. The difference in climate between Upper Mesopotamia and Anatolian highlands created seasonal, vertical, and relatively long migrations between the Upper Mesopotamian lowlands (*kışlak*) and the Anatolian highlands (*yaylak*) throughout history.[100] This migration pattern along a north-south axis has been observed among the Turcoman and Kurdish nomadic communities of Anatolia for centuries.[101]

The physical geography and environment even shaped the military expansion of the Turkic armies into Anatolia starting in the eleventh century. A.C.S. Peacock argues that the utilization of winter quarters in the south and especially summer pastures in the north played an important role in determining the direction of the early expansion of the Seljuk nomads into Anatolia in the eleventh century.[102] During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the summer pastures of the Akkoyunlus were located in the Armenian highlands, and their winter quarters were located in the flat lowlands of Diyarbekir, Mardin, Urfa, and Rakka. Composed

[98] I use the Upper Tigris basin to refer the region covering Diyarbakır, Mardin and Batman in Modern Turkey, which in general are parts of Upper Mesopotamia.
[99] Turunçoğlu et al., "Climate," 28.
[100] L. Johnson, "The Nature of Nomadism," 31-37; Hütteroth, *Bergnomaden und Yaylabauren in Mittel Kurdischen Taurus*.
[101] Aydın, "Toroslarda Yaylacılık ve Çukurova'nın Önemi," 114.
[102] Peacock, *Early Seljuk History A New Interpretion*, 145-146.

largely of nomadic Turkish, Kurdish, and Arab pastoral tribes, one of the political aims of the Akkoyunlus was to manage and maintain full control over both their summer pastures and winter quarters.[103]

These seasonal and vertical migrations between Upper Mesopotamia and the Anatolian highlands were also adopted by several tribes and tribal confederations after the Ottoman conquest of the region. The Bozulus and Karaulus confederations of the sixteenth century,[104] the Milli of the seventeenth century,[105] and the Alikan, Bekiran, Reşkotan,[106] and Miran[107] tribes of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries adopted this migration pattern.[108] Clearly, the dry, hot summers in Diyarbakir, Mardin, and Urfa were unfavorable for animal husbandry. Indeed, in the second half of the nineteenth century, when Ottoman authorities intended to settle the Bekiran, Alikan, Reşkotan, and Penceran tribes in the Diyarbakır region, the tribes collectively petitioned the government claiming that the heat in Diyarbekir made life unbearable. They demanded proper pasturing grounds from the Ottoman authorities and threatened to leave the region otherwise.[109]

Some of these tribes migrated longer distances than others. Works on the Bozulus confederation of the sixteenth-century Ottoman Empire indicate that at certain periods, this confederation made seasonal migrations of almost 5 hundred kilometers between the lowlands of Upper Mesopotamia and the northeastern lands of Çıldır and Georgia.[110] Smaller Kurdish tribes of the nineteenth century, such as

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[103] Woods, *The Aqquyunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire,* 29, 80.
[104] Demirtaş, "Bozulus Hakkında."; Gündüz, *Anadolu'da Türkmen Aşiretleri*.
[105] BOA, AE SAMD III 92/9167, 15 Receb 1138 (March 19, 1726) *"aşâir-i mezbureden [Milli] Musasanlu ve Dudikanlu ve Mirmanlu ve Mematlu ve Cemalleddin ve Sepki bir büyük ulus-ı ekrad ile Erzurum dağlarına yaylağa çıkup avdetlerinde"*
[106] Frödin, "Les formes de la vie pastorale en Turquie," 262; Hütteroth, *Bergnomaden und Yaylabauren in Mittel Kurdischen Taurus*.
[107] Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, 66.
[108] Thevenin, "Kurdish Transhumance: Pastoral Practices in South-east Turkey."
[109] Koç, "Kışla, Kordon ve Asker, Tanzimat Dönemi'nde Göçebe Aşiretleri Kontrol Etmek," 13.
[110] Demirtaş, "Bozulus Hakkında," 39; Gündüz, *Anadolu'da Türkmen Aşiretleri*, 101-108.

the Alikan, Reşkotan, Bekiran, and Miran, however, migrated distances of 1-2 hundred kilometers between winter quarters in Diyarbekir and Cizre and grazing grounds in Bitlis, Bingöl, and Muş.[111] Arguably, the size of the animals shaped the distance of the migration. The larger the animals, the more distant they traveled. And the migration patterns, distances, cycles, and routes of these tribes in the twentieth century were documented first by Frödin and Hutteroth and later by Beşikçi.[112] Some of these tribes continue this pattern even today.[113]

The Zilan tribe and several others that would later "settle" the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire played a crucial role in the formation of a large confederation that wintered in the Upper Tigris river basin, especially around Diyarbekir, Silvan, Kulb, Mardin, Savur, and Nusaybin, in the sixteenth century.[114] Sources from the sixteenth century illustrate that the Zilan tribe and a number of others including the Besyan, Bociyan, Zikziyan, Hevidi, Dilhoran, and Banuki comprised the Silemani Confederation of the Diyarbekir region.[115] Furthermore, a 1518 survey of Amid (Diyarbekir) also indicates that the Zilan, Besyan, Bociyan, and Banuki tribes resided in several villages and winter quarters (*kışlak*) in Diyarbekir.[116] Up until the beginning of seventeenth century, the Zilan tribe adopted a seasonal migration pattern similar to that of the Turcoman Bozulus Confederation characterized by vertical migration between the Upper Tigris river basin and the

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[111] Sykes, "The Kurdish Tribes of the Ottoman Empire," 460-462; Frödin, "Les formes de la vie pastorale en Turquie," 200.
[112] Hütteroth, *Bergnomaden und Yaylabauren in Mittel Kurdischen Taurus*; Frödin, "Les formes de la vie pastorale en Turquie."; Beşikçi, *Doğu'da Değişim ve Yapısal Sorunlar*.
[113] Thevenin, "Kurdish Transhumance: Pastoral Practices in South-east Turkey."
[114] Halaçoğlu, *Anadolu'da Aşiretler*, 5, 2486-2489; Bizbirlik, "16. Yüzyılda Kulb Sancağı," 141. See also BOA, A.DVNSMHM.d 35/411, 15.06.986 (August 19, 1578).
[115] Han, *Şerefname Kürt Tarihi*, 294.
[116] İlhan, *Amid (Diyarbekir) 1518 Detailed Register*, 143-181, 576-593.

mountains of Erzurum.[117] They spent their winters in the Upper Tigris river basin, where the climate was rainy, and migrated to grazing grounds in Bitlis, Muş, Hınıs, and Malazgirt in summer.[118]

In the late sixteenth century, these nomads gradually abandoned their customary winter settlements in the Upper Tigris river basin and permanently "settled" on the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire.[119] Çiftçi argues that this new migration was supported by Ottoman authorities who expected these tribes to be a barrier to Safavid expansionism.[120] Clearly, from the mid-sixteenth century or the time that the province of Erzurum was incorporated into the Ottoman imperial structure, a gradual migration of Kurdish tribes from Upper Mesopotamia to the Lesser Caucasus (or the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire) was evident. It was at times supported and at times prevented by Ottoman authorities, depending on the politics of the time.[121]

Why did the Zilan abandon their winter quarters in the Upper Tigris river basin and adopt a new pattern along the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire? There is no single explanation. First, many segments of the Zilan maintained their former pattern of migration until the mid-eighteenth century.[122] Thus, this migration was gradual one rather than being a one-time, mass migration.

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[117] For more information about the migration patterns of several nomadic tribes wintering in Upper Tigris river basin during the twentieth century, see Frödin, "Les formes de la vie pastorale en Turquie."; Hütteroth, *Bergnomaden und Yaylabauern im Mittleren Kurdischen Taurus*.
[118] Several mühimme records mention the tensions between the tribe of Zilan and peasants of Erzurum, when nomads migrated to the summer pasturing grounds. Kahveci, "29 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (984/1576), Tahlîl-Özet-Transkripsiyon," 187, 199, 212, 219.
[119] BOA, AE.SAMD III 214/20754, 10 C 1136 (March 6, 1724).
[120] Çiftçi, "Migration, memory and mythification: relocation of Suleymani tribes on the northern Ottoman–Iranian frontier," 3-5.
[121] In mid-sixteenth century, some of the Kurdish tribes were settled in the northeastern frontier with the purposes of populating the region and protection of it from foreign incursions. See Aydın, *Erzurum Beylerbeyliği ve Teşkilatı*, 290.
[122] BOA, AE SAMD III 92/9167, 15 Receb 1138 (March 19, 1726) *"aşâir-i mezbureden [Milli] Musasanlu ve Dudikanlu ve Mirmanlu ve Mematlu ve Cemalleddin ve Sepki bir büyük ulus-ı ekrad ile Erzurum dağlarına yaylağa çıkup avdetlerinde"*

Although there is no data about the movement of the Celali and Hayderan tribes[123] to the north during the sixteenth century, there are several sources concerning the Zilan tribe that refer not only to tensions between them and the governors and peasantry, but also to their winter and summer pastures. During the second half of the sixteenth century, they were not only in conflict with the governors (*Beylerbeyi* or *Voyvoda*) of Diyarbekir but also with their externally-appointed rulers. The major source of the conflict mostly concerned taxes and military levies imposed on them. Mühimme records of 1564/65 describe several incidents in which they complained about the unfair taxation of their tribes. In a record dated 1565, they complained of oppression and unfair taxation by the voyvoda of Diyarbekir.[124] Another mühimme record dated 8 March 1571 indicates that they resisted the conscription of tribal members at the time the Ottoman Empire was mobilizing its manpower for the war of Lepanto.[125] Heavy taxation, conscription, and conflicts over grazing grounds may have contributed to their migration to the northeastern frontiers of the empire, which was not only far from being under direct Ottoman control and influence but also rich in pasturing grounds.

Another reason could be broader climatic changes. Indeed, the beginning of their migration corresponds to the migration and dispersion of the Bozulus Confederation in Western and Central Anatolia[126] and to the migration of several

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[123] Indeed, there is a small tribe named as Hayderan, which appears as part of Zilan tribe during the first half of the sixteenth century, see Çiftçi, "Migration, memory and mythification: relocation of Suleymani tribes," 7.

[124] Yıldırım et al., *6 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (972 / 1564-1565), Özet-Transkripsiyon ve İndeks*, 323-324, 327-328, 333.

[125] Yıldırım et al., *12 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (978-979 / 1570-1572), Özet-Transkripsiyon ve Index* 197.

[126] Demirtaş, "Bozulus Hakkında."; Planhol, "Geography, Politics and Nomadism in Anatolia." For the seasonal migration routes of the Bozulus Confederation and the taxes being paid by this confederation, see Bozulus Kanunnâmesi in Barkan, *XV ve XVI ıncı asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Ziraî Ekonominin Hukukî ve Malî Esasları: Kanunlar*, 141-142.

yörüks and pastoralists from lower to higher altitudes.[127] Such large-scale demographic movements may have been influenced by broad climatic change taking place in Upper Mesopotamia. Sam White argues that there were three possible reasons that led the nomadic tribes of Aleppo, Diyarbakır, and Rakka to disperse into Central and Western Anatolia in the seventeenth century. First, nomads benefited from crises in the early seventeenth century and expanded their pasturing grounds at the expense of agricultural communities. Second, the climatic fluctuations of the Little Ice Age increased drought and famine in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, forcing nomads to seek out new pasturing grounds. Third, he states the impact of the centralization and expansion of the Safavids in the seventeenth century, which led to the movement of the nomads to inland regions away from the Safavid border.[128]

The third reason presented by White was clearly not the choice of the Zilan as they migrated to the Safavid border. The migration of these tribes (and a number of others like the Cihanbeyli, Badili, Merdisi, and Şikaki) to the northeastern frontiers and other parts of the empire starting in the late sixteenth up until the mid-eighteenth century is a matter for another study, yet these migrations, which took place in intervals over two hundred years and changed the demographic composition of Western, Central, Northeastern Anatolia, are clearly not accounted for merely by political explanations. Environmental change, conflicts over pasturelands, the over-taxation and conscription of nomads, and the increasing pressure of the Anezeh and Şammar, two large Bedouin tribes from Syria in the south, contributed to the general

[127] Tabak, *Solan Akdeniz 1550-1870*, 287-351; İnal, "Environmental History as an Emerging Field in Ottoman Studies," 9.
[128] White, *The Climate of Rebellion*, 242-243.

trend of abandoning the Upper Mesopotamia between the late sixteenth and the mid-eighteenth century.

2.2.2.2 A new pattern: the short distance migrations

The second option for nomadic pastoral communities was to spend winters in the mild lowland villages of the province of Erzurum in the Ottoman Empire or in the districts of Revan and Khoy in the Persian Empire. An important distinction between these and Upper Mesopotamia is that the harsh continental climate of the region prevented winter grazing of animals and increased the dependency of the nomads on the outside world, especially on local administrators and peasants. Such a dependency created a reciprocal relation with administrators. Nomads submitted taxes or military levies to the local administrators in return to use the pasturing grounds and winter settlements.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the largest nomadic pastoral tribes of the northeastern Ottoman Empire and Northwestern Iran, such as the Zilan, Celali, and the Haydaran, used the pastures of the Alagöz, Aladağ, Ağrı, and Sinekî mountains as their main pasturing grounds during the summers (See Figure 2). These pasturing grounds, which are partly located in the high plateaus of the steppes with Alpine and sub-Alpine vegetation, provided abundant grass for pastoralists throughout history.[129] However, the winter quarters of the same nomadic tribes were generally located variously in or near the lowland plains of the Ottoman and Qajar Empires according to the politics of the time. The Khoy, Maku, Erevan, Patnos, Erciş, Adilcevaz, Malazgirt, and Muş plains in the Ottoman and Qajar Empires (and, starting in the late 1820s, also the Russian Empire) were the main wintering quarters

[129] Kaya, "Aladağ'da Yaylalar ve Yaylacılık," 130-131.

of the nomadic tribes. Although the migration patterns of the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran in this region were generally seasonal and vertical (not necessarily in a north-south direction), they were a relatively shorter distance in the nineteenth century.

As Khazanov argues, "the fodder requirements of the herd, the necessity of providing it with water and the best way of protecting it from the cold in winter are the basic factors in the economic life of the nomad."[130] The summer pastures and winter quarters of a given tribe were sometimes within the "borders" of an empire or sometimes separated by the boundaries of two or more intersecting empires. The arbitrary geographical distribution of the lowland winter quarters and highland summer pastures of the nomadic tribes within and across borders resulted in different variants of migration. If not disrupted by other external factors like wars, famines, over-taxation, conscription, and territorial shifts, the migration patterns of the nomads were largely compatible with the ecological setting of the region. Nevertheless, during the long nineteenth century, the winter quarters, summer pastures, and migration routes of the tribes were far from stable, changing due to wars between the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires, over-taxation and conscription carried out by Ottoman, Persian, and Russian frontier governors, territorial shifts, and environmental factors like disease, famine, and locust infestations. One dominant feature of pastoral nomadism in this region in the nineteenth century was adaptation not just to the environment but also to the political

[130] Khazanov, *Nomads and Outside World*, 50.

circumstances of a region. Given a stable political atmosphere, nomads managed to maintain a regular migration pattern between winter and summer quarters.[131]

Until the Russian occupation of Revan in the late 1820s, some sections of the Zilan under the leadership of Hüseyin Agha wintered around the villages of the Khanate of Revan in Aras Valley, but they migrated to the pasturelands of the Sinekî in the Ottoman Empire during the summers.[132] The horizontal distance between the winter and summer residences of the Zilan tribe was sixty to seventy kilometers, and the difference in altitude was no more than 1000 meters. The winters in the villages of Revan are milder, with an average of temperature -2 degrees Celsius in January, which were better for the nomads compared to their summer pastures in the Ottoman Empire, where the average winter temperature was no more than –9 degrees Celsius. In 1843, the chief of the Zilan, Hüseyin Agha, stated in a petition to the governor of Erzurum that his tribe migrated to the Persian side of the border since the winters were milder there compared to Kars or Bayezid.[133]

The Celali tribe also engaged in short distance seasonal migration. During the nineteenth century, several clans of Celali living on the Ottoman side of the border wintered in the villages of Bayezid and Kars and spent their summers in Aladağ and the pastures of Kars. Those on the Persian side wintered in district of Maku or on the lower slopes of Mount Ağrı, and they migrated to the Kazlıgöl or to the pastures of

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[131] Mehmed Hurşid, *Seyâhatnâme-ı Hudud*. Mehmed Hurşid Pasha presents a detailed account of the nomadic tribes of the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire, as well as their wintering and grazing spaces. Neverthless, his account only covers a certain period. The migration cycles, patterns of the nomads and their winter quarters and summer pastures were far from being stable, changing due to a variety of political and environmental factors.

[132] BOA, HR.SYS 1335/45, (1853) *"Revanda bulunan Zilanlu Hüseyin Ağa Rusyalu Revanı zabt edinceye dek her sene eylatıyla oraya* [Sinekî] *gelur yaylar."*

[133] Foreign Office 424/7B, Representation of Hussein Pasha, Chief of the Kurdish Tribe of Zeelaun, the Governor General of Erzeroum, May 1843, 123.

Abagay on the Ottoman side of the border.[134] Like in the case of the Zilan, the migrations of the Celalis were seasonal, relatively vertical, and over a short distance.

Between 1836 and 1850, the winter quarters of Haydaran tribe were located in Khoy in the Persian Empire; the summer quarters of the same tribe were located in the rich pasturelands of Abagay in the Ottoman Empire.[135] Thus, a seasonal, relatively vertical migration of fifty to eighty kilometers took place between the Persian and Ottoman empires. Compared to the Ottoman frontier towns of Van, Erciş, Adilcevaz, and Bayezid, the winters in Khoy are milder with a -1.2 degrees Celsius average temperature in January. However, compared to the Ottoman frontier towns, there was a shortage of pastures on the Persian side. Thus, the Haydaran nomads spent their winters in the relatively milder Persian towns of Khoy, Çaldıran, and Karain, but migrated to the pasturing grounds in the Ottoman Empire in April where the grazing was better. Clearly, the political configuration of the border did not prevent this seasonal migration so long as the Haydaran paid their grazing taxes (*yaylakiye*) to the local hereditary rulers of Van that controlled the pasturelands of Abagay and paid their wintering taxes (*kışlakiye*) to the governors of Khoy in Persia. The ecology of these Ottoman and Persian lands were expressed by one of the chiefs of the Haydaran tribe. In 1838, Sultan Agha, mentioned in a conversation with the Consul James Brant that "the pastures and abundance of water in Turkey were great advantages over Persia, but the milder winter in the latter country was some compensation."[136]

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[134] Mehmed Hurşid, *Seyâhatnâme-ı Hudud*, 262-263.
[135] BOA, İ.MSM 52/1345, 21 Şaban 1264 (July 23, 1848) *"fasl-ı baharda Abagay nahiyesine gelerek Mahmudi memurlarına senevi külliyetlü yaylak ve hediye bahâlâr verüb can ve malımızı feda ederek gün götürmekde iken"*
[136] James Brant, "Notes of a Journey Through a Part of Kurdistan, in the Summer of 1838," 414.

The migration patterns of the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran during the nineteenth century resembles European transhumance, especially Alpine transhumance as defined by Davies, in which animals were kept in stables during the winters and driven to highlands during the summers. Davies also argues that in this pattern, agricultural activities supplemented animal husbandry, especially to provide for the needs of the animals during the winters. During the early nineteenth century, nomadic tribes of the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire and northwestern Iran kept their animals in lowland stables during the winters and moved to highlands during the summers. Yet these nomads partook in little or no agricultural activity and were thus dependent on outside world, especially on the peasantry to provide for the requirements of the livestock in winter.

This dependence on the outside world contributed to the strengthening of "feudal" bonds. To avail themselves of Ottoman lands in winter in the early nineteenth century, some of these nomadic tribes established relationships with local, ruling Kurdish dynasties (families that had been granted land and administrative rights) of the Ottoman Empire and acted as the military conscripts of those dynasties. In this relationship, local rulers distributed the nomads among the peasant villages, and in return, the nomads paid wintering taxes and submit military enlistees. The central and local Ottoman administration defined these nomads as *meşta-nişin* or *kışlak-nişin aşâir* (winter settler tribes).[137] The purpose of their settlement was not a need to engage in agricultural production but was rather shaped by the need to protect their herds from extreme climatic conditions. Thus, prior to the second half of the nineteenth century, nomads resided as "guests" among the lowland villagers during long winters. Since during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century,

[137] BOA, HAT 804/37129 F, 1229 Şaban 12 (June 30, 1814).

the Zilan, Haydaran, and Celali nomads had limited or no experience with agricultural production, they were dependent on agriculturalists for hay, fodder, and shelter for their livestock during the winters. In this respect, the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire differed from Upper Mesopotamia where nomads were less dependent on agricultural producers during the winters. [138]

The requirements of the nomads during the winters, their dissemination among peasant villages by borderland governors and Kurdish dynasties, and the obligation of the peasantry to provide them with food, hay, and shelter created a "feudal" relationship among the peasantry, nomads, and local ruling dynasties. In borderland regions like Kars, Bayezid, Van, Malazgirt, and Muş, the requirements of the nomadic tribes became a heavy burden on the agriculturalists that in the long run contributed to the impoverishment and emigration of the peasantry.[139] Mela Mehmûdê Bayezîdî states how the peasantry (particularly Armenian, but also Kurdish) were exposed to several misdeeds of the wintering nomads (*ekrad*) during the long winters. He states that peasantry had to provide almost all the requirements of the nomads during the winter. The peasantry not only obliged to share their houses with tribes, but also had to provide food and grain to tribesmen.[140]

The exploitation of the peasantry by nomadic tribes during the winters attracted the attention of British consuls. In 1839, the British Consul of Erzurum,

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[138] The absence of the agriculture is also evident in the petitions of the tribal groups. See BOA, MVL 678/45, 23 Zilhicce 280 (May 30, 1864) "*Cümlemiz bu ana kadar ziraat ve hiraset ashabı olmayub himaye-i idaremiz akçesiyle şuradan buradan mübayaa olunarak idare edilmekde"* BOA, MB 7/46, 11 L 1264, (September 10, 1848) *"Hisse-i vergümüzü sair iskânları icra olunan aşâir gibi vermek çift çubuk tedarikiyle ziraat ve hiraset ve aşar-ı şeriye ve rüsumat-ı sairemizi kamilen tediye ve ifa eylemek"* The Sepki was one of the earliest tribe who engaged in agricultural production in a supplementary manner, see BOA, HAT 718/34245 D, 29 Z 1247 (May 30, 1832) *"Muş havâlisinde bulunan Sepki 'aşireti hayme-nişinlikden feragât iderek zirâa't ve hirâset ile meşgul olduklarından"* The Haydaran tribe started to pay tithe (*aşâr*), a tax on agricultural production starting from the late 1850s and the amount was not much comparing to the other taxes paid by them, see BOA, ML.VRD.d 2944, 1274 (1857).

[139] BOA, HAT 804/37129, 1229 B 19 (July 7, 1813).

[140] Bayezîdî, *Adat û Rusûmatnameê Ekradiye,* 115-116.

James Brant, mentioned this widespread practice of the nomads in the districts of Van and Muş. He stated that nomads who formerly migrated between the mountains of Muş and the low country adjacent the Tigris had adopted new winter quarters in the villages of northeastern Anatolia instead of migrating to Upper Mesopotamia.[141] During a trip from Erzurum to the Persian frontier, he noted several villages that provided shelter to Kurdish nomads, especially in districts of Muş, Bitlis, Adilcevaz, Erciş, and Van;

> On account of its rigor in this elevated ground, it is impossible for people in winter to live in tents, nor could animals exist without the shelter of stables. It was of course a great relief to the cattle, as well as to the Koords, to find a means of avoiding a long durable migration; but that the advantage should have been conferred on them at the expense of the poor peasantry, was most unjust. A great part of the summer they must toil to collect the fodder required in the winter for the maintenance of the Koordish cattle and having so many animals to supply with food, the peasants cannot increase their own stock as they otherwise might.[142]

The dependence of pastoral nomads on peasant communities during the winters was even more evident in times of famine. Indeed, during the nineteenth century, the towns and villages of northeastern Anatolia were hit repeatedly by drought, locust infestations, and famines that affected not only agricultural production but also the pastoral economy. In the early 1840s, most villages and towns experienced a failed harvest on account of locusts, and in 1847 cholera and locusts hit the region at the same time.[143] Each of these disasters influenced agrarian communities and pastoral nomads differently. The British consul of Erzurum, James Brant, claimed that locusts wiped out nearly all of the wheat and barley produced by peasants of Muş in 1840. Large numbers of peasants fled to Russian and Persian lands, or to the surrounding

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[141] Foreign Office, 78/366, James Brant, "Report of a Tour through a part of Koordistan," Erzeroom, July 15, 1839, 62.
[142] Foreign Office, 78/366, James Brant, "Report of a Tour through a part of Koordistan," Erzeroom, July 15, 1839, 62.
[143] BOA, A.MKT 142/8, 1264 L 5, (September 4, 1848).

towns like Diyarbakir, Harput, Kars, and Van. Crop failures and famines also affected the nomadic tribes as the shortage of fodder and hay during winters prompted them to look for alternate winter quarters. Consul Brant asserted that the circumstances in Muş had kept away many Kurdish families who depended on the Armenian peasants for shelter as well as for hay and straw for their cattle.[144]

2.3 Defining tribalism

As with the term pastoral nomadism, there is no universally accepted definition of the term tribe. As the pastoral nomads of northeastern Anatolia are largely tribal in terms of their social and political organization, the term requires explanation. Several scholars note that "tribe" as used in the European context does not always correspond to or explain what exists in Middle Eastern societies.[145] It overlooks variations in size, organization, structure, and kinship ties that varied from region to region, culture to culture. In the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire, a variety of terms like *aşiret, kabîle, el, taife, oymak, eylât*, *cemaat,* and *oba* were used to refer to tribal groups of the Ottoman-Persian frontier and the various levels of their organizations. Some definitions of "tribe" emphasize kinship ties in their formation, while others define the term on the basis of political and social allegiance, and yet others underscore the importance of invented origin myths.[146] However, as Tapper notes, "anthropologists have followed their own varying epistemologies to emphasize widely differing criteria and thus have failed to agree on a general definition of what constitutes a 'tribe'."[147]

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[144] Foreign Office 78/443, James Brant, "Report on the Trade of Erzeroom for 1840 and on the State of Pashalık", Erzeroom, January 21, 1841, 112.
[145] Tapper, "Introduction," 6.
[146] For a discussion on different usage of the term tribe, see Tapper, "Anthropologists, Historians, and Tribespeople."
[147] Tapper, *Frontier Nomads of Iran*, 49.

According to Martin Van Bruinessen, who has published seminal anthropological and historical studies on Kurdish tribes, a Kurdish tribe is a "a socio-political and generally also territorial (and therefore economic) unit based on descent and kinship, real or putative with a characteristic internal structure. It is naturally divided into a number of sub-tribes, each in turn again divided into smaller units; clans, lineages, etc."[148] Contemporaneous sources and studies on nineteenth-century Kurdish tribes indicate that each Kurdish tribe (*aşiret, eşîr,* or *êl*) was generally comprised of several clans (*kabîle, tâife,* or *oymak*) of various size and political importance. Each clan was again divided into lineages (*malbat*) and each lineage into families. Families (*çadır*, *hâne,* or *mal*) represented the smallest social and economic unit of the tribes. While kinship bonds played an important role in defining the tribes, they were not the sole tie that brought different households, lineages, and clans together. As Bruinessen argues, among the Kurdish tribes, kinship ties played a unifying role within households and lineages, while clans tended to be bound on the basis of political allegiance.[149]

A confederation, on the other hand, is relatively larger-scale unit than a tribe, comprised of various tribes and clans of differing size and organization. According to Tapper, "a confederacy or confederation should be used for a local group of tribe that is heterogeneous in terms of culture, presumed origins and perhaps class composition, yet is politically unified, usually under a central authority."[150] Bruinessen, on the other hand, defines a confederation as "a large scale association, less integrated than a tribe, and with less clearly defined boundaries. It is a political association of tribes that previously had an independent existence and that retain a

[148] Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 51.
[149] Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 51.
[150] Tapper, "Introduction," 10.

separate identity."[151] Bruinessen's definition better explains the organization of the tribal formations under consideration. The Zilan, Celali and Haydaran, when they were powerful enough to form large confederations, embraced a variety of formerly independent tribes. However, compared to the large nomadic tribal confederations of the Middle East such as the Shammar of Northern Arabia,[152] the Shahsevans of Persia, the Bozulus of Southern Anatolia,[153] and the Muntafiq of Basra, the tribal formations on the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire were relatively small in size, which was probably a consequence of the fragmented political and physical geography. The Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran endured as either tribes or as tribal confederations from the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth century. Thus, my use of the terms "confederation" or "tribe" depends on the political and social organization of the tribes and the historical context at a particular moment in time. That is to say, when they formed large-scale organizations composed of a variety of formerly independent tribes, I prefer "confederation;" otherwise, I use the term "tribe."

2.3.1 Background, composition and size of the Zilan, Celali and Haydaran

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the tribal groups of the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran were called "Silvanlı" by Ottoman authorities.[154] According to Rohat Alakom, this name originated from the "Silvan" district of Diyarbekir,[155] where some segments of these tribes resided during the sixteenth century as stated in the previous section. Çiftçi argues that this term was adapted from the name of sixteenth-

[151] Bruinessen, "Kurdish Tribes and the State of Iran," 369.
[152] Williamson, "A Political History of the Shammar Jarba Tribe."
[153] Demirtaş, "Bozulus Hakkında."
[154] BOA, HAT 811/37227, 19 B 37 (April 11, 1822).
[155] Alakom, *Torin, Arîstokraten Serhede*, 28-29. See also Sasuni, *Kürt Ulusal Hareketleri*, 49.

century Silemani Confederation of the Diyarbekir region, which was composed of the Zilan, Besyan, Bociyan, Zikziyan, Hevidi, Dilhoran, Banuki, and Berazi tribes.[156] By the mid-eighteenth century, however, almost all of these tribes had abandoned their age-old winter quarters in the Diyarbakır region and reappeared on the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire, especially in Kars and Bayezid.[157] Moreover, they were no longer organized under the Sılemani Confederation during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but rather under several different tribal confederations.

During the early nineteenth century, the Zilan managed to form a large tribal confederation composed of a variety of local clans and tribes that occupied Kars, Bayezid, and Persian Revan (see Appendix A). As elaborated upon in the next chapter, the chief of the Zilan, Hüseyin Agha, formed and maintained military, political, and matrimonial ties with frontier governors of the Ottoman and Qajar Empires and other borderland tribes, succeeding not only to gain access to pasturing grounds in Ottoman Kars and Bayezid and Persian Revan but also to strengthen his military power and prestige among a variety of local tribes. During the first quarter of the nineteenth century, he had the reputation of being chief among chiefs (*ağavat ağası*) of the Kurdish tribes of the Khanate of Revan.[158] Russian and Ottoman sources indicate that in the mid-nineteenth century, the Zilan itself consisted of some 2 thousand families from the Redkî, Gelturî, Dilhoran, Berukî, Kürdikan, and several

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[156] Çiftçi, "Fragile Alliances in the Ottoman East," 37-45.
[157] BOA, C.AS 899/387, (1764), *"Ma'farkin aşiretinden elsine-i nasda Silvanlı oymağı tesmiye olunan Besden* [Besyan] *ve Bocden* [Bociyan] *ve Zilan nam aşiret reayası bundan mukaddem kadimi yerlerinden kalkub Erzurum Eyâletinde vaki' Bayezid ve Malazgird Sancaklarında tavattun ve ikâmet eylemelerinden"* See also BOA, C.AS 617/26032, 1136 (1724); BOA, C.DH 29/1427; BOA, AE.SAMD III 214/20754, 10 C 1136 (March 6, 1724); BOA, AE SAMD III 92/9167, 15 Receb 1138 (March 19, 1726); BOA, C.DH 161/8014, 19 B 1174 (February 24, 1761); BOA, C.AS 899/38700, 19 B [1]178, (January 12, 1765).
[158] BOA, HAT 811/37227, (April 11, 1822); BOA, HAT 827/37455 i, 19 S 36 (November 26, 1826).

other formerly independent tribes, and clans.[159] But in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the political and moral authority of Hüseyin Agha extended over other tribes and clans of the region including the Celali, Cemaldinî, and Cunukî as well as some clans of the Sepkî and Haydaran – a population of almost 4½-5 thousand households.[160] These tribes were spread over a vast area stretching from Persian Revan to Ottoman Kars, Çıldır, and Bayezid. Assuming that tents housed an average of six people, Hüseyin Agha had some form of political and moral authority over 25-30 thousand people.[161]

The Ottoman population survey of Kars in 1835 indicates how some of the tribes that made up the Zilan were organized. According to this survey, the nomadic Cunukî/Cünükanlı tribe, a sub-division of the Zilan, was composed of several camps (*oba*) each led by an officially-recognized headman (*muhtar*). The 197 tents of the Cunukî were spread among eighteen camps, ranging from five to twenty-four tents each.[162] Mela Mahmûde Bayezidi, a Kurdish religious scholar of the nineteenth century who wrote on the manners and customs of the Kurdish tribes of the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire, provides similar numbers. According to him, a nomadic Kurdish camp (*zom*) was composed of ten to forty tents, and each camp was led by an agha (*axa*) and tribal elders (*rîspi*).[163] Within this tribal

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[159] Jaba, *Recueil de Notices et Récits Kourdes*, 2.
[160] BOA, HAT 811/37227, (April 1822), *"Silvanlı Aşireti meşhur olan Zilanlı Aşireti ve Şemdin Agazadelerden Hüseyin Aga elyevm beyleri olub Revan toprağında sakinlerdir. Bazı oymaklarıyla iki bin ve Agalığı mumaileyh Hüseyin Aga'da olan Celali Aşireti dahi iki bin mikdarı adem olduğu ve yine Zilanlıya tabi olan Haydaranlı Bedri Ağa ile İran tarafından üç yüz kadar ve Cemadanlı takımının altıyüz mikdarı evleri olub"*
[161] According to the census taken in 1830, the Cunukî (Cünükanlı) and Kaskî (Kaskanlı) subsections of the Zilan within the sanjak of Kars comprised of 1739 males, (555 *hane*). Assuming that the overall population was (2x1739) = 3478 soul, each tent was corresponding to a number of 6.2. For a detailed information regarding the household distribution of the Cunukî and Kaskî tribes, see BOA, NFS.d 2787/3. I. Shopen also gave similar numbers for the Kurdish families. According to him in the Khanate of Revan, each Kurdish tent was composed of six people. See Bournoutian, "Eastern Armenia on the Eve of the Russian Conquest," 58-59.
[162] BOA, NFS.d 2787/3, 1256 (1840-41).
[163] Bayezîdî, *Adat û Rusûmatnameê Ekradiye,* 142.

hierarchy, the leader of each camp was under the authority of the chief of the Cunukî, and the chief of the Cunukî along with his tribe were in turn part of a larger confederation, namely the Zilan. What brought the Cunukî and other tribes together under a single political organization was mutual concern for living along the border of two empires, not kinship ties.

And yet, as discussed in coming chapters, the confederative character of the Zilan did not last. Because of the wars fought between Ottoman, Russian, and Persian empires in this geography and because of shifting political borders, the Zilan confederation gradually fragmented into smaller segments. In late nineteenth century, it's population was recorded as 1500 households (*hane*).[164]

In the mid-nineteenth century, the population of Haydaran was spread from Persian Khoy to Ottoman Van and Bayezid and fluctuated between 1500 and 2000 tents depending on their ability to form alliances with smaller, local wandering tribes. According to Alexander Jaba, the Russian Consul of Erzurum, the Haydaran who inhabited the environs of Bayezid and Van, was composed of several tribes in the mid-nineteenth century, including the Haydaran, Hamdikânlu, Ademânlu, Latekî, Marhorî, Milli, and Azizi. Each of these tribes further divided into segments (see Appendix A). Furthermore, there were 200 tents of the Haydaran tribe in the Persian town of Khoy.[165] The Haydaran, like the Zilan, had powerful chiefs at their center whose authority was approved by tribal elders and headmen as well as imperial authorities. As discussed in coming chapters, the political conditions of the second half of the nineteenth century were favorable for the Haydaran tribe. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Haydaran had become a large, highly-stratified tribe.

[164] Foreign Office, 424/203 "List of Principal Kurdish Tribes in the Vilayet of Erzeroum," 1902.
[165] Jaba, *Recueil de Notices et Récits Kourdes*, 3.

According to Mark Sykes, its population was 20 thousand families at the beginning of the twentieth century.[166]

Likewise, the Celali were composed of a number of tribal groups including the Halikânlı, Sakanlı, Belhikanlı, Hasasorânlı, and others who, in the mid-nineteenth century, were spread among Ottoman Bayezid, Russian Revan, and Persian Maku (see Appendix A).[167] Yet the Celalis were less integrated than the Zilan and Haydaran and had no powerful chief who governed all clans of the tribe. Before the 1830s, several sections of Celalis were under the authority of the chiefs of the Zilan, and even thereafter, the chief of Zilan, Hüseyin Agha, maintained some moral and political authority over them. Since several sections of the Celalis had close ties with the Zilan, travelers and officials who visited this tribal region variously listed particular tribes as part of the Zilan or part of the Celali. For instance, Jaba, Derviş Pasha, and Hurşid Pasha list the Cünükân as belonging to the Celali.[168] What is more, during the second half of the nineteenth century, despite being called as Celali, each section was ruled by its own chief and they were in constant conflict with one other.

Each of these tribes was relatively homogenous in terms of religion and language.[169] Indeed, the degree of homogeneity or heterogeneity changed according to the size and composition of the tribes and was thus entirely dependent on the historical context at a particular moment. Within larger tribal structures, homogeneity was most evident at the lower levels, while at the larger levels they were more heterogeneous in terms of their culture and history. The same was true for

[166] Sykes, "The Kurdish Tribes of the Ottoman Empire," 478.
[167] Jaba, *Recueil de Notices et Récits Kourdes*, 2.
[168] See Appendix A.
[169] Blau, "Die Stamme des Nordöstlishen Kurdistan."; Mehmed Hurşid, *Seyâhatnâme-ı Hudud*, 257-267.

religion. Many of these tribes were Sunni Muslims belonging exclusively to the Shafi'i branch.[170] Yet at the broadest levels of their organization, several Hanafi clans were also included. In particular, some sections of the Zilan and the Celali living in Kars were Hanafi Muslims. Ottoman sources indicate that there were Yezidi clans who also sometimes allied themselves with the Sepki and possibly the Haydaran.[171] Yet these clans were much more independent during the second half of the nineteenth century. The Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran were exclusively Kurdish speaking, yet the Zilan also managed to establish alliances with Turkoman, Karapapak, and Persian tribes of Kars and Revan.

2.3.2 Chiefly family and tribal hierarchy

Segmentary lineage theory assumes that social groups like tribes are segmented on the basis of lineages. They consist of units that are in balanced opposition to each other. They have equal access to material resources and thus comprise a politically "egalitarian" structure.[172] Contrary to this suggestion, not all clans among the tribes of the Zilan and Haydaran had equal political power, wealth, or influence within the tribal structure. Some were politically and economically more dominant (in terms of their access to pastures and livestock), while others remained peripheral or had a clientelistic relation to the larger tribe. Thus, the segmentary division of these tribes did not entail an egalitarian or decentralized tribal structure. During the nineteenth century, the Zilan and Haydaran tribes on the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire had relatively stratified political structures under the authority of reasonably

[170] Bayezîdî, *Adat û Rusûmatnameê Ekradiye,* 224.
[171] Mehmed Hurşid, *Seyâhatnâme-ı Hudud*, 263; HAT 1/18H 28 ZA 35 (September 6, 1820).
[172] For a discussion on segmentary lineage theory, see Caton, "Anthropological Theories," 90-99, See also Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer, A Description of Modes.*

powerful chiefs. Martin Van Bruinessen[173] and Madawi al Rasheed[174] point out that like states, tribes also had cores and peripheries. While core units (lineages or clans) had more influence over decision-making processes regarding the future of the tribe and had more access to material resources, peripheral units were politically less dominant and more likely to forsake the tribe during political and economic crises. Comparing to Haydaran and Zilan, the Celali was politically less integrated. Thus, at the larger level the intra-tribal competition prevented the emergence of a highly hierarchical tribal confederation. But, each clan/tribe forming Celali was stratified in its internal organization.

As stated above, Kurdish tribes were composed of clans, and clans were composed of lineages. The lineages at the core of the Zilan, Haydaran, and sub-divisions of Celali were called *torun* (tribal elites). Torun is not the name of a lineage, but a social, political, and economic category referring to the wealthiest and politically most powerful lineage which was at the core of the clan and the tribe. In other words, toruns were the families among whose ancestors were the chiefs of the tribe.[175] Rohat Alakom point out the importance, influence, and role of torun families among the Kurdish tribes of the region. During the nineteenth century, Mala Kose (the lineage of Kose) was the ruling family of the Zilan, and Mala Şero that of Haydaran.[176] The chiefs of the tribal confederation who came from these lineages represented the ultimate authority within the tribe. Yet their nomination to this position depended on the consent of the toruns, and clashing interests among the toruns and their respective followers could lead to the division of a tribe. During the

[173] Bruinessen, "Kurdish Tribes and the State of Iran," 381.
[174] Rasheed, "Tribal Confederations and Emirates in Central Arabia."
[175] Ahmed Macid, "Kürdistân Ahvâli ve Mesele-i Islahât," *Mülkiye*, no. 8 (1 Eylül 1325) *"Peder ve ceddi ağalık etmiş olanlar, yani erbab-ı asâletden bulunanlar (torun) namına haiz olub, beynel-ekrad pek muazzez ve muhteremdirler."*
[176] Alakom, *Torin, Arîstokraten Serhede*, 47-56.

nineteenth century, the chiefs of the Haydaran, Celali and Zilan tribes were mostly selected from among torun lineages. Toruns, who presumably had a common ancestor, had strong kinship ties and represented the wealthiest and politically most powerful segments of the tribal population. Their influence was critical for the selection of chiefs and the decision-making processes regarding the future of the tribe. Given that they inhabited a contested borderland region, there was a need to establish direct relations with surrounding empires, compete for the best pasturelands and winter quarters, and protect herds against enemies, which led nomads to produce powerful chiefs that acted as intermediaries between tribesmen and imperial states.

Mela Mehmûdê Bayezîdî states how Kurdish chiefs were the ultimate authority among the tribesmen. They were not only had the right to collect taxes from tribesmen, but also independent (*musteqil*) in its authority to punish those who were not obeying his rules. [177]

Yet, as discussed in coming chapters, the internal organization and structure of the tribes did not remain constant throughout the long nineteenth century. Increasing contact with imperial powers, imperial interventions in tribal structures, and the commercialization of pastoral production deeply affected the livelihood, size, organization, and structure of the tribes.

[177] Bayezîdî, *Adat û Rusûmatnameê Ekradiye,* 62, 97.

CHAPTER 3

TRIBES ON A MILITARY FRONTIER (1810s –1840s)

> The commoners residing in all of the frontier districts and sub-districts of imperial lands which are contiguous with and neighboring Iran and especially those living in Muş, Hınıs, Tekman, Bayezid, and Eleşgird in the province of Erzurum and in Van, Kars, and Çıldır have been dispersed and miserable and deserve imperial mercy and compassion. The inhabitants of said places and ones in their vicinity were bad-tempered Kurds. Besides, as the administrators of those districts do not trust each other, each protects and allies with a tribe and settles those tribes in the districts under their administration. In so doing, they have routinized giving those tribes winter quarters as if they were soldiers and burdening the poor commoners with providing food and all of the requirements of these tribes and their livestock. Moreover, because of their dissident characters, in summers, by feigning pretexts, they plunder and steal all of the property, products, and livestock of the districts and cross to the Iranian side. And when they run into trouble on the Iranian side they cross to the Ottoman side, so to which side they belong is indistinguishable. The poor commoners can no longer bear such plunder and theft and so they are dispersing and their districts are being abandoned. Notably, even the governors of Erzurum allot winter quarters to said tribes in the districts of Erzurum and collect large taxes and winter quarter taxes from them; that is the reason why the commoners of those places became so miserable and destroyed.[178]

In 1813, Ahmed Pasha, the newly-appointed governor of the province of Erzurum, described the political, social, and economic conditions of the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire in the correspondence above. Endless war and conflict among the local families/dynasties[179] and the governors ruling the frontier, an increase in border-violating migrations by the pastoral nomadic tribes, the miserable conditions of the peasantry, and their decreasing population due to tribal depredations were the outstanding local issues mentioned in the text. At the

[178] BOA HAT 804 / 37129 F, 1229 Receb 19 (June 7, 1813). See Appendix B for the Ottoman Turkish version of the text.

[179] In this dissertation, the term "dynasty" is used to refer the Kurdish families (*ümerâ-i ekrad, hanedân-ı ekrad*) who were governing sanjaks in the Ottoman East as *yurtluk* and *ocaklık* until the Ottoman centralizing reforms of the mid-nineteenth century. In the literature the term "emirate" is also in use to refer such administrative-political units.

international level, military and political developments were also unpleasant for the Ottomans. The 1810s and 1820s corresponded to Russian advances in the Lesser Caucasus which had turned into a great threat for both the Ottoman and Persian empires.[180] Such military expansion deeply affected the political configuration in the region. As advancing Russian armies tried to win the support of local populations, including tribal ones, both Ottoman and Persian central authorities needed the military might of the frontier tribes and local dynasties more than ever.

This chapter elucidates how pastoral nomadic tribes along the northern stretch of the Ottoman- Persian border adapted themselves to political and military developments in the region prior to the mid-nineteenth century. It pays special attention to the political, military, and fiscal relations of the nomadic tribes with Kurdish dynasties, Ottoman pashas, and Persian khans between 1810 and 1840. This chapter is divided into two. The first part provides information about the political organization of the northern stretch of the Ottoman-Persian border during the early nineteenth century. This part also explores the place of the nomadic tribes in this political setting. The second part, on the other hand, explores the transformation of Lesser Caucasus and Northeastern Anatolia into a military zone of the three rival empires. By focusing on the cases of three tribes, this part discusses how the transformation of tribal space into a military zone influenced local tribal groups, their social and political organizations, and their economic activities. Each case focuses on a different aspect of tribes within this military frontier.

[180] Atkin, *Russia and Iran*, 99-122.

3.1 Administrative organization of the Ottoman–Persian borderland

In late 1810s, the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire were ruled by several local Kurdish dynasties that had been granted land there.[181] The sanjaks of Muş[182] and Bayezid[183] were ruled as *yurtluk-ocaklık*s (hereditary administrative units) by such dynasties/families (See Figure 3). Similarly, Persian Revan was ruled as a semi-independent khanate until its invasion by the Russian Empire in 1827,[184] and Khoy was under the control of the Qajar Princes.[185] Boundaries dividing the northern parts of the Persian and Ottoman Empires were not definite. As Ateş indicates borders were contested not only between the imperial capitals of the Qajar and Ottoman empires, but also among the nobles of the borderland whose claims sometimes transcended the claims of central imperial powers.[186] Instead of a clear-cut line dividing the empires, what defined the political configuration and territorial separation of the region was the loyalty of notables occupied important fortresses on the frontiers of the two empires. Since local loyalties continuously shifted, so did the borders.

The summer pastures and winter quarters of the nomadic pastoral tribes of this landscape were divided not only by imperial borders but also by the borders of local power holders. These local power holders, similar to those of the Balkans, were mostly in conflict during the first half of the nineteenth century. Given this setting, pastoral nomadism was not only an adaptation to the environmental but also to the

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[181] Although the border was predominantly ruled by Kurdish notable families, who were occupying these frontier lands as yurtluk-ocaklık sanjaks, Van and Kars were ruled by centrally appointed governors, who were called as muhafız (guardian). In case of Van, however, a local ruling family later to be known as Timur Pashazades managed to keep themselves in Van as guardians during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. See, İnbaşı, “Van Valileri 1755-1835.”
[182] Duman Koç, "Governing a Frontier Sancak in the Ottoman Empire."
[183] For the Ottoman administration of the Bayezid district since the early eighteenth century, see Karataş, *Bayezid Sancağı ve İdarecileri (1700-1914)*.
[184] Bournoutian, "Eastern Armenia on the Eve of the Russian Conquest."
[185] Hambly, "Iran During the Reigns of Fath Ali Shah and Muhammad Shah," 150.
[186] Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands,* 59.

political and fiscal atmosphere.[187] Nomadism, in many instances, entailed the avoidance of increasing pressure by local governors and imperial powers in order to find more favorable conditions for themselves and their livestock. In a region where not only imperial powers but also local power holders were in constant struggle, nomadic tribes who had traditionally roamed the Ottoman-Persian borderland with their livestock became frequent targets of the frontier dynasties, pashas, khans, and imperial capitals. Hence, as revealed in the following pages, nomads turned into important agents of local and imperial politics.

In the last two decades, scholars began to pay particular attention to two administrative, fiscal units known as *yurtluk-ocaklık sancaks* and *hükümet*s (hereditary administrative districts) which had dominated the region since the sixteenth century. Early studies of these structures are mostly descriptive and focus primarily on official discourse, rules, and regulations that were put into practice in the sixteenth century. They describe their differences from regular administrative units and their changing number and distribution from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries.[188] Despite a few recent studies, there is a lacuna regarding the nature of yurtluk-ocaklıks and hükûmets of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Unlike Balkan and Anatolian notables like Tepedelenli Ali Pasha of Ioannina, Paspanzade of Vidin, and Çapanoğlus and Karaosmanoğlus of Anatolia, the Kurdish dynasties that governed large tracts of land in the Ottoman East as yurtluk-ocaklık sanjaks during

[187] This seems not to be peculiar to this landscape. William Irons accentuates the fact that though a semi-sedentary pattern would be enough to the pastoral economy of the Yomut Turcomans, they preferred an entirely nomadic lifetsyle because of its political advantages. See Irons, *The Yomut Turkmen: a Study of Social Organization*, 635.
[188] For such studies, see Göyünç, "Yurtluk-Ocaklık Deyimleri Hakkında."; Kılıç, "Ocaklık Sancakların Osmanlı Hukukunda ve Idari Tatbikattaki Yeri."; Tezcan, "The Development of the use of 'Kurdistan' as a Geographical Description."

the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries have not attracted the necessary attention of academia.

In the widest sense, yurtluk-ocaklıks and hükûmets referred to large tracts of land along with a collection of administrative, fiscal, and judicial rights granted to local Kurdish notable families in return for their loyalty and service to the Ottoman Empire.[189] Several scholars explain the proliferation of these land grants within the context of the Ottoman-Safavid rivalry that started during the early sixteenth century. While the Safavids were trying to exert direct rule over the Kurdish emirates, the Ottomans adopted a more flexible policy in the region.[190] In return for their loyalty to the Ottoman Empire in their struggle against the Safavids, the Kurdish dynasties were granted significant autonomy.[191] Other scholars suggest that such land grants were "pre-modern" state practices in the governance of frontier regions. Gabor Agoston stresses that the Ottoman Empire realized the limits of its actual power to penetrate into and effectively control borderland societies, so from the sixteenth century onwards it adopted these two pragmatic, flexible systems in its eastern borderland regions.[192] Rhoads Murphy also points out the financial and practical impossibility that the Ottomans could garrison and defend such a vast borderland region, as well as the necessity of its reliance on the tribes to monitor and manage the frontier on their behalf.[193]

As Agoston points out, these types of grants were not inventions of the Ottoman Empire but were centuries-old practices that dominated the local political configuration that the Ottomans merely adopted. In practice, they were nothing more

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[189] Göyünç, "Yurtluk-Ocaklık Deyimleri Hakkında."; Kılıç, "Ocaklık Sancakların Osmanlı Hukukunda ve Idari Tatbikattaki Yeri," 3-4.
[190] Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 138-145.
[191] Tezcan, "The Development of the use of 'Kurdistan' as a Geographical Description," 545-547.
[192] Agoston, "A Flexible Empire: Authority and Its limits on the Ottoman Frontier," 18-20.
[193] Murphey, "Resumption of the Ottoman-Safavid Border Conflict, 1603 -1638," 154.

than a collaboration: a recognition and extension of the authority of local Kurdish and Turcoman entities on the eastern frontier.[194] Yurtluk-ocaklıks were not entirely Ottoman inventions in their function and logic but more a practice that was in use since the time of the Karakoyunlu and Akkoyunlu principalities called *soyurghals* (imperial land grants), which the Timurids and Safavids had also adopted.[195] Besides their long history, such land grants were not peculiar to the Ottoman East but also had been exercised in various periods in other frontier regions like Trabzon, Çıldır, Acara, Kozan, and Georgia.[196]

The loyalty and support of yurtluk-ocaklık holders became crucial for the Ottoman Empire not only during the incorporation of Kurdish emirates into Ottoman territory in the sixteenth century but also during the centuries-long Persian-Ottoman rivalry. Comparing to the yurtluk-ocaklık sanjaks, hükûmets were fiscally and administratively more autonomous. In a hükûmet, land granted to the Kurdish notables was regarded as their property (*mülk tarikiyle*) and they had the right to transfer them to their heirs. Tax surveys were not conducted and there were no centrally-appointed officials (*mefruz'ul kalem ve maktu'al kadem*) on this kind of land.[197] The formula "*mefrûzü'l-kalem ve maktûü'l-kadem,*" which was used in Ottoman regulations to refer to the "autonomy" of the hükümets, was an adaption from the Persian formula used to denote the autonomy of the soyurghals: *"qalam ve*

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[194] Agoston, "A Flexible Empire: Authority and Its limits on the Ottoman Frontier," 23-24. See also Bayraktar, "Yurtluk-Ocaklıks: Land, Politics of Notables and Society," 58-59.
[195] Inalcık, "Autonomous Enclaves in Islamic States," 113-114 and Bayraktar, "Yurtluk-Ocaklıks: Land, Politics of Notables and Society," 50-51. Bert underlines the resemblance of the soyurghals to the iqtâ system in their function and argues that its specific form was given by the Jalayirids during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. See Fragner, "Social and Integral Economic Affairs," 94-95.
[196] For the yurtluk and ocaklık lands in Trabzon, see Toraman, "Trabzon Eyaleti'nde Yurtluk-Ocaklık Suretiyle Arazi Tasarrufuna Son Verilmesi (1847-1864)." For its practice in Çıldır, Kars, and various other places, see Gencer, "Merkezilesme Politikaları Sürecince Yurtluk-Ocaklık Sisteminin Değişimi," 84-85, 90-91. Its practice in Georgian lands has not yet been studied. For an Ottoman document mentioning such type of lands in Georgia, see BOA, C.TZ 170/8480.
[197] Göyünç, "Yurtluk-Ocaklık Deyimleri Hakkında.", Kılıç, "Ocaklık Sancakların Osmanlı Hukukunda ve Idari Tatbikattaki Yeri," 3. Tezcan, "The Development of the use of 'Kurdistan' as a Geographical Description," 547.

qadam kutâh va kashida dârand" – that is, "secured against the pen and protected against access."[198]

The northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire had been dominated by yurtluk-ocaklıks since the sixteenth century, but there were no hükûmets even during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in this region.[199] The earliest known imperial code that described the legal status and administration of the yurtluk-ocaklık sanjaks was prepared during the reign of the Sultan Suleyman I, and these terms were repeated in various other codes in later centuries with little or no change.[200]

In light of these codes, the basic characteristics of yurtluk-ocaklık sanjaks can be defined as follows: unlike regular sanjaks of the Ottoman Empire, the rulers of yurtluk-ocaklık sanjaks possessed their territories in a hereditary way. In other words, the rights passed down from father to son and could be enjoyed generation after generation. The rulers of the yurtluk-ocaklık sanjaks – that is to say, Kurdish dynasties – could not be dismissed from their posts by state intervention except in the cases of disobedience to the imperial state and oppression of the subjects. If a given yurtluk-ocaklık holder died without an heir, his land and properties would be passed on to relatives upon the approval of other local Kurdish dynasties. As in the case of regular sanjaks, tax surveys were held in yurtluk-ocaklıks. Besides the existence of the timar and zeamet systems, there were also servants of the sultan (*kul taifesi*) in this particular sanjaks.[201] All the yurtluk-ocaklık holders were required to participate in campaigns together with the governors of the province to which they were subject.

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[198] Fragner, "Social and Integral Economic Affairs," 503.
[199] Fatih Gencer presents the list of Kurdish notables who were given monthly salaries in return for their confiscated lands. Only in the sanjaks of Çıldır, Hakkari, Muş, Hizan, and Bayezid, the amount being paid by the state was exceeding 500.000 piasters. The list reveals how far this type of land grants was widespread just prior to their abrogation. See Gencer, "Merkezilesme Politikaları Sürecince Yurtluk-Ocaklık Sisteminin Değişimi," 87-93.
[200] Tezcan, "The Development of the use of 'Kurdistan' as a Geographical Description."
[201] Yurtluk-ocaklık holders were also regarded as kûl, confiscation of their property and even execution of their holders were in practice during the period under study.

If they refused to heed the call of their provincial governor, their lands could be taken from them and given to someone else within the family.[202] Unlike hükümets, yurtluk-ocaklık lands were not regarded as the private property (*mülk*) of their holders in the regulations. In accordance with their legal status, holders were neither allowed to sell or donate nor turn their yurtluk-ocaklık lands into endowments.[203]

As evidenced in the following pages, the stipulations of the yurtluk-ocaklık sanjaks were far from inviolable. Indeed, what defined the autonomy and limitations of yurtluk-ocaklık lands depended entirely on the political context of the particular time. Parameters like geographic distance from the imperial center and periods of peace and war made the terms of yurtluk-ocaklık sanjaks flexible in practice, either limiting or expanding the political and economic autonomy of their holders. Having held them for centuries, the dynasties ruling the yurtluk-ocaklık sanjaks of Bayezid and Muş had great fiscal and political autonomy. There were even cases in which yurtluk-ocaklık lands were treated like private property and sold to third parties by their holders. For instance, a late Ottoman source argues that Mahmud Pasha, the mutasarrıf who held the district of Bayezid as a yurtluk-ocaklık sanjak, granted the district of Maku as a dowry to Cafer Quli Khan, the governor of Persian Khoy, when he married his daughter.[204] During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, yurtluk-ocaklık holders of Bayezid and Muş enjoyed even greater administrative and fiscal autonomy as they were close to the Persian border, a politically sensitive area. The possibility of an alliance with neighboring empires – that is, with the Qajar

[202] Tezcan, "The Development of the use of 'Kurdistan' as a Geographical Description," 547. For the translation of these texts and comments, see Ahmet Akgündüz, Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri, 4. Kitap Kanunî Devri Kanunnâmeleri, I. Kısım Merkezî ve Umumî Kanunnâmeler, İstanbul, 1992, 479, Sertoğlu, *Sofyalı Ali Çavuş Kanunnamesi*, 32. Aynî Ali Efendi, Kanunnâme-i Al-i Osman, Osmanlı Devleti Arazi Kanunları, 6
[203] Serdoğlu, *Sofyalı Ali Çavuş Kanunnamesi*, 15.
[204] BOA, I.HR 65/3194, 12 Ca 66, (March 16, 1850).

Empire or, from 1830s onwards, with the Russian Empire – compelled the Ottoman imperial center to establish flexible relations with the Kurdish notables governing these districts.

Yet these types of land were not immune from government intervention. When an heir was granted a yurtluk-ocaklık, he was expected to form good relations with the centrally-appointed governors and neighboring houses as well as to protect the Ottoman border from foreign assault. During the first half of the nineteenth century, several Kurdish notables along the northeastern border of the Ottoman empire were replaced with new ones after being accused of violating the aforementioned conditions.[205] While the land of the yurtluk-ocaklık holders could not be confiscated, Ottoman authorities in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries could force newly-appointed yurtluk-ocaklık holders to pay a *muhallefat bedeli* (a certain amount of cash) upon the death of the previous holder.[206] The practice of muhallefat bedeli, which was paid by newly-appointed yurtluk-ocaklık holders of Muş and Bayezid, was not practiced in other regions of the Ottoman East during the early nineteenth century. The amount prevented the transmission of a large amount of capital to the next generation, and in most cases, this amount was a matter of negotiation between imperial center and newly-appointed yurtluk-ocaklık holder.[207] Rivalry within the houses to acquire the post consistently resulted in such financial dealings with the imperial capital.[208]

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[205] Karataş, *Bayezid Sancağı ve İdarecileri (1700-1914)*, 58-59.
[206] BOA, C.ML 706/28810, BOA, HAT 1364/53898, BOA, HAT 962/41207.
[207] Following the death of Murad Pasha of Muş, his heirs were forced to pay an amount of cash to the imperial treasury, see BOA, HAT 1364/53898. Upon the death of Ishak Pasha, the governor of Bayezid, his son Mahmud Pasha was appointed as the governor of Bayezid, yet he was forced to pay 250.000 piasters cash to the imperial capital, see BOA, C.ML 706/28810.
[208] Ali Yaycıoğlu argues that developments of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century resulted in a new order of notables, who came to act as administrative, fiscal, and military entrepreneurs, whose relations with the Ottoman establishment were based on ongoing deals, negotiations, and a process of give and take. Yaycıoğlu, *Partners of the Empire, The Crisis of the Ottoman Order.*

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, two powerful dynasties played a critical role in the political configuration of the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire. The governors of Muş, the Alaaddin Pashazades, had maintained the sanjak of Muş as a yurtluk-ocaklık since the early eighteenth century. They managed to control large tracts of fertile land and the support of a variety of pastoral tribes by the mid-nineteenth century.[209] The sanjak of Bayezid, which had always been an important outpost on the eastern frontier, was ruled by a Kurdish family later to be known as the Ishak Pashazades. Other important districts like Malazgirt, Bulanık, Eleşgirt, though not centers for political authority, were sites of economic struggle between these two dynasties and as well as among a variety of less powerful local actors (See Figure 3 for the map of northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire). Most of the eastern sanjaks of the province of Erzurum, including Bayezid, Malazgirt, and Diyadin, were granted yurtluk-ocaklık status during the late seventeenth century.[210] Interestingly, this coincided with the migration of several pastoral nomadic tribes from the Upper Tigris river basin to Northeastern Anatolia. Indeed, the migration of large numbers of Kurdish tribes to the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire may have triggered the adoption of yurtluk-ocaklık system in this geography since Kurdish dynasties were considered to be better able to maintain control over tribal populations. Until the liquidation of the yurtluk-ocaklık system in the mid-nineteenth century in accordance with the Tanzimat reforms, each of these sanjaks was ruled by hereditary Kurdish dynasties. The Ottoman imperial center rarely intervened in the administration of these sanjaks – only in cases of misgovernment by their holders or of security breaches on the border. Even in such cases, the sanjaks were granted to someone else inside rather than outside the family.

[209] Duman Koç, "Governing a Frontier Sancak in the Ottoman Empire."
[210] Kılıç, "Ocaklık Sancakların Osmanlı Hukukunda ve Idari Tatbikattaki Yeri," 6.

Benefiting from the weak Ottoman presence along the border, the holders of these sanjaks maximized their power and influence by engaging in warfare with surrounding polities.

Managing the allocation of revenue-producing districts among local power holders became an important tool in the hands of the capital, allowing them to exert imperial control over the Kurdish dynasties of the region and balance the power among them. During the late eighteenth century, when Ishak Pasha, the governor of the sanjak of Bayezid, expanded the sphere of his influence far into Hınıs, Tekman, Malazgirt, Hamur, Eleşgirt, and Diyadin, the governor of Erzurum and the imperial capital began to perceive his economic and military power as a threat. Yusuf Ziya Pasha, the governor of Erzurum at the time, argued that with the backing of tribal groups like the Sepki, Mematlu, and Haydaran, Ishak Pasha intended to establish independent rule over the land of Kurdistan.[211] Upon his death, the Ottoman imperial capital reallocated these districts. Hınıs and Tekman were taken from the family and granted as yurtluk-ocaklıks to a rival dynasty – to the governor of Muş, Murad Paşa.[212] A detailed account of yurtluk ocaklık sanjaks ruled by Kurdish dynasties is beyond the scope of this study. However, a history of the pastoral Kurdish tribes is impossible without understanding political setting of the region.

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[211] Karataş, *Bayezid Sancağı ve İdarecileri (1700-1914)*, 34. See also BOA, C.DH 68/3392 *"Bayezid Mutasarrıfı Ishak Paşa'nın kuvvet-i maliyesi ber-kemal olduğundan memâlik-i Kürdistanı bi'l istiklal zabt ve tasarruf daiyesiyle etrafında bulunan yurtluk ve ocaklık ashabının herbirini birer töhmet ile ithâm ederek Eleşkird ve Hınıs ve Tekman ve Malazgird ve Hamur ve Diyadin Sancaklarını birer takrib ber vech-i malikane kendü ve oğulları üzerlerine berat ettirüb ol vechle gereği gibi kesb-i miknet ve istiklâl etmek hasebiyle Erzurum Valilerine akranından dûn muamele ve etrafında bulunan Kars ve Van muhafızlarına kendi etbaaı misüllü muhatebe eylediğinden"*

[212] BOA, HAT 96/3885, This was possibly a reward for Murad Pasha because of his service in capturing rebel Gürcü Osman Pasha. For the revolt of Gürcü Osman Pasha, see Esmer, "A Culture of Rebellion."

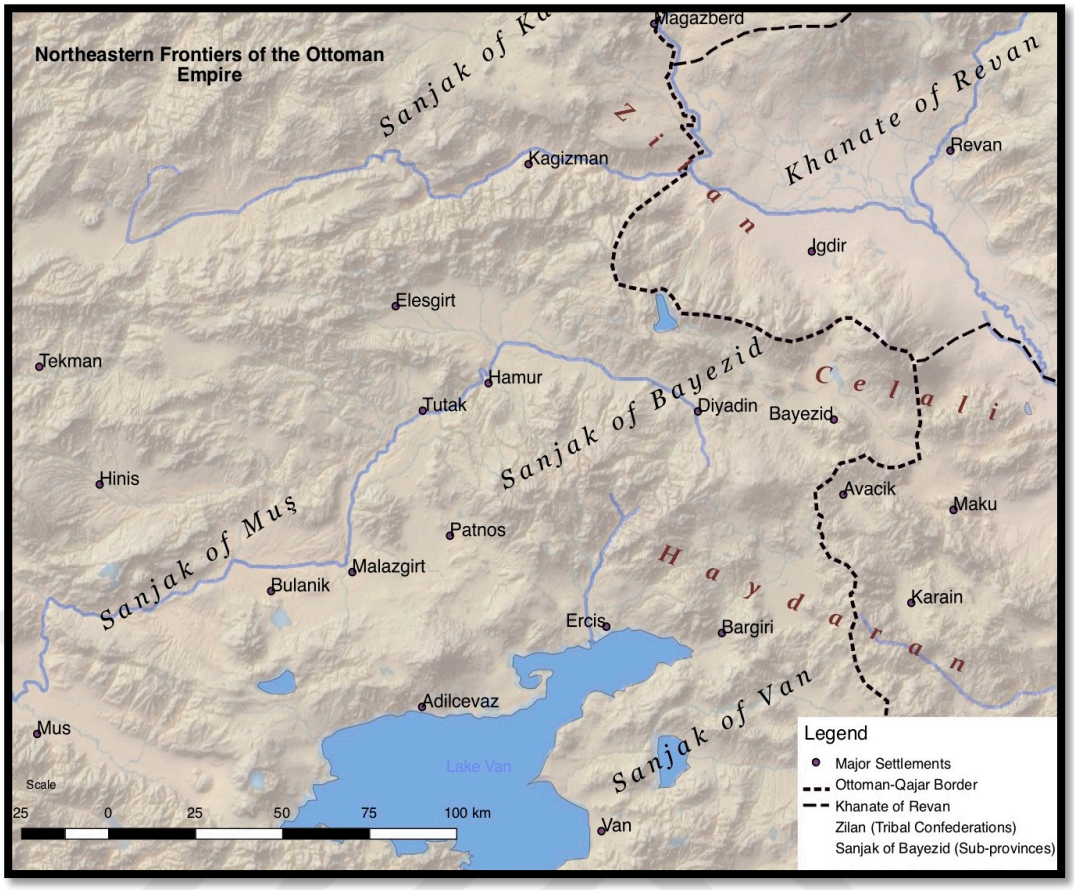

Figure 3. Map of northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire in 1820s
Source: [Made with QGIS, For boundaries of the Khanate of Revan, I have benefited from Bournoutian, "Eastern Armenia on the Eve of the Russian Conquest," 21, 38, 60]

At the end of the eighteenth century, the northern territories of the Persian Empire that bordered the Ottoman and Russian Empires were also ruled through indirect administration. Indeed, a history of the region is incomplete without mentioning the role of the Khanate of Revan (Erevan), particularly of Hussein Quli Khan (1807-1827). Until its occupation by the Russian Empire in 1827, the northern borders of the Persian Empire were ruled by several semi-independent khanates like the Khanates of Erevan, Nakhchivan, Karabagh, and Ganja. Among these, Erevan was the most populous one. And due to its strategic location, it was turned into an outpost of the Persian Empire against the incursions of both the Russians and the

Ottomans.[213] Erevan was also a prosperous frontier city of the Persian Empire under the administration of Hussein Quli Khan (1807-1827). As guardian of the border (*serdar)* and khan of a strategically and militarily important province, Hussein Quli Khan enjoyed great administrative, military, and fiscal autonomy under Persian rule.[214] His sphere of influence expanded beyond the borders of Khanate of Erevan to Maku and Khoy in the south and Bayezid and Kars in the west.[215]

According to George A. Bournation, during the reign of the Hussein Quli Khan, 67.4 percent of the land within the Khanate of Erevan was state land (*divani*) either used to mitigate state expenditures or granted to high officials, tribal leaders, and bureaucrats as *teyul*. The teyuls were land grants of various size and form by the shah in return for military service or were grants of state land given to officials in lieu of a salary.[216] In terms of their function and logic, they resemble the yurtluk-ocaklıks of the Ottoman Empire and the soyurghals of the Safavid and Qajar periods. Yet unlike them, teyuls were not typically inherited.[217] *Teyuldar*s (holders of teyuls) were charged with administrative and judicial duties as well as with the organization of troops, the collection of taxes, and the cultivation of the land for short periods of time.

Teyuls were also granted in tribal districts. Given the density of tribal entities in the demographic structure of Iran, teyuls were an important land grant system not only for managing the tribal populations but also for extracting military levies from them. Richard Tapper argues that “the tribal population of Iran during the eighteenth

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[213] Atkin, *Russia and Iran*, 10-11.
[214] Hambly, "The Traditional Iranian City in the Qajar Period," 572.
[215] Morier mentions his power over İbrahim Pasha of Ottoman Bayezid, see Morier, *A Second Journey Through Persia, Armenia, and Asia Minor*.
[216] Floor, *A Fiscal History of Iran in the safavid and Qajar Periods 1500-1925*, 330; Bournoutian, "Eastern Armenia on the Eve of the Russian Conquest," 142-143.
[217] Fragner, "Social and Integral Economic Affairs," 513.

and nineteenth centuries probably varied between one and a half and three millions, forming from a quarter to a half of the total population, and predominating in frontier districts and in areas better suited to pastoralism than agriculture."[218] As elsewhere, the tribes in Iran were also important sources of manpower and revenue for the empire. Tracts of land were granted as teyul or soyurghals to tribal leaders in return for providing military contingents. Likewise, the nomadic tribes of the Khanate of Revan received *teyul* on the condition that they provide military units.[219] For instance, several villages in the district of Surmeli were given as teyul to the leaders of the Zilan tribe.[220] Travelers of the nineteenth century who visited the Khanate of Erevan, including James Morier, noted the presence of Kurdish nomads serving the khan militarily.[221] Like in the case of the Ottoman Empire, nomads had a reciprocal relationship with the khan of Revan. Thus, like the Kurdish dynasties of the Ottoman frontier, the khans of Erevan also tried to win the support of nomads who moved fluidly across the boundaries of the Ottoman and Persian empires.

Conflict was not the only defining aspect of relations among the Kurdish dynasties, local governors, Persian Khans, and tribes. These local dynasties and Ottoman frontier peoples developed close relationships with notables and tribes of the Persian side of the border. Such relations were further strengthened through matrimonial ties, trade, loans, military support, and gifts. Despite tensions, such relations created a shared cultural, political, economic, and military network in the Ottoman-Iranian borderland. The lineage of the Ishak Pashazades established matrimonial alliances not only with Iranian tribes but also with the Persian imperial dynasty. Marriage was not simply a familial relation among the upper strata of

[218] Tapper, "The Tribes in Eighteenth Century and Nineteenth Century Iran," 507.
[219] Bournoutian, "Eastern Armenia on the Eve of the Russian Conquest," 142.
[220] Bournoutian, "Eastern Armenia on the Eve of the Russian Conquest," 146-148.
[221] Morier, *A Second Journey Through Persia, Armenia, and Asia Minor*, 330-331.

borderland society; rather, it was a promise and manifestation of good relations as well as the desire to establish and maintain alliances with surrounding polities. What is clear is that both tribal chiefs and local Kurdish dynasties paid great importance to the establishment of matrimonial ties between them. The chief of the Zilan, Hüseyin Agha, established marriage ties with both the Ottoman and Persian frontier governors. He was not only son-in-law of the khan of Revan, Hussein Quli Khan, but also father-in-law of Abdulhamid Pasha, the mutasarrıf of Bayezid.[222] He also established matrimonial alliances with other tribes that were part of the Zilan Confederation. He was the maternal uncle (*dayı*) of Pertev Bey, the chief of the Kaskanlı tribe.[223] Behlül Pasha, who ruled the Bayezid district, had familial ties with the khan of Revan. Furthermore, he married to the daughter of Süleyman Agha, the chief of the Sepki tribe. Marriage bonds significantly explain the alliances and power distribution within and across imperial boundaries. Not surprisingly, when Kurdish dynasties ruling over frontiers of the Ottoman Empire and Kurdish pastoral nomads migrating across the Ottoman-Persian border began to be conceived as a threat, marriage with Persians also began to be perceived as a threat to not only imperial integrity but also to Ottoman imperial identity. It thus was forbidden by imperial laws and regulations.[224]

3.1.1 Nomads, governors and peasants

In 1813, Ahmed Pasha, the newly-appointed governor of Erzurum, described how the mutasarrıfs of the sanjaks of Van, Muş, Bayezid, Malazgirt, Eleşgirt, and Magazberd safeguarded themselves in their castles and acted independently of his

[222] Karataş, *Bayezid Sancağı ve İdarecileri (1700-1914)*, 58. See also BOA, HAT 815/37282 F.
[223] BOA, HAT 816/37301 C.
[224] Kern, *Imperial Citizen Marriage and Citizenship in the Ottoman Frontier Province of Iraq*

orders. These governors, most of whom held their sanjaks as yurtluk-ocaklıks, maximized their political power and wealth by using tribal groups as a military power to seize the agricultural surplus.[225] The sanjaks of Bayezid and Muş, which were two important administrative and military centers on the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire, were governed as yurtluk-ocaklık sanjaks by local Kurdish dynasties. As discussed in the previous part, during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the sanjak of Muş was governed by a local Kurdish family called the Alaaddin Pashazades and the sanjak of Bayezid was ruled by the descendants of the famous Ishak Pasha.[226] Neighboring districts, such as Hınıs, Tekman, Malazgirt, Eleşgirt, and Diyadin, were no less important as they were revenue generating districts over which local dynasties engaged in fierce competition. Some were granted as yurtluk-ocaklıks to less powerful Kurdish dynasties to keep the power of the grand dynasties in check.

The ability of the Kurdish dynasties to mobilize and control tribal nomads has attracted little attention among scholars. Even for the pre-Tanzimat period, this relationship is mostly treated as a given. As discussed in Chapter 1, a dominant argument in the histories of the Kurdish tribes is that before the administrative and fiscal reforms of the nineteenth century, they lived under the subordination and control of the Kurdish dynasties. While the mid-nineteenth century tribes were below the Kurdish dynasties in terms of administrative hierarchy,[227] given the political instability of the geography, real-world relationship between the nomadic tribes and

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[225] BOA, HAT 804/37129 D, 5 RA 29, (February 24, 1814) "*Van ve Muş ve Bayezid ve Malazgird ve Eleşgirt ve Kars Eyaleti dahilinde Magazberd Sancakları İran'a kurb ve civar oldukları ve zikr olunan sancaklar mutasarrıfları oldukları kalelerde kaud ile Erzurum vülât-ı 'azamı taraflarına gelmekde imtina' üzere oldukları*" Three years later, in 1817 the new governor, Celal Pasha also made a similar statement. See BOA, HAT 782/36609 A,1233 S 15 (December 25, 1817)

[226] Duman Koç, "Governing a Frontier Sancak in the Ottoman Empire."; Karataş, Bayezid Sancağı ve İdarecileri (1700-1914).

[227] For the administrative hierarchy in Ottoman East, see Özoğlu, *Kurdish notables and the Ottoman State*, 55-56; Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State*, 194.

the Kurdish dynasties was more a reciprocal contract than one of unquestioned subordination.

During the wars on the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire, the nomadic pastoral Zilan, Sepki, Celali, and Haydaran tribes served as the military might of the warring Kurdish dynasties.[228] The nomadic way of life required large numbers of horses and an almost instinctive military training that nomads used to their advantage in their relationships with sedentary societies.[229] Each of these tribes could put together thousands of cavalrymen for the service of the frontier authorities of the Qajar and Ottoman Empires in times of need. Yet this service was hardly unconditional but based on an implicit, reciprocal contract. Pastoral nomadic tribal populations offered their service to local dynasties in return for pasturing grounds, winter quarters, and other kinds of rights. Indeed, mirroring the political aspects of "feudal" relationships between lords and vassals, the themes of protection (*sahâbet*) and loyalty (*sadâkat*) occupied an important place in the definition of this relationship.[230] Yet the loyalty of a given nomadic tribe to a given frontier authority was not static and depended on the particular benefits that they could extract from the Kurdish dynasties.

Nomadic tribes of the region roamed their pasturelands during the summers but had to find proper shelter for themselves and their livestock during winters. Since the nomads of the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran had limited or no knowledge of agricultural production, they were dependent on the peasantry and local governors to

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[228] BOA, HAT 799/37054, 1230 RA 23 (April 4, 1815) *"Ekrad-ı İraniyan-ı yaylak bahanesiyle nice senelerdir Van ve Kars ve Bayezid ve Eleşgird ve Muş taraflarına gönderüb darülharblerin zabıtları dahi işbu aşâiri kuvve-ü'l ittihaz ederek fukara üzerine kışlakçı vaz eyleyerek bi'l cümle fukaranın emvâl ve eşya ve devab ve mevâşisi şeyyen ve kışyen İrana çekub"*

[229] Nikolay N. Kradin, "Introduction: Social Evolution, Alternatives and Nomadism," 16. See also Irons, "Cultural Capital, Livestock Raiding," 466-475.

[230] BOA, HAT 1227/47923 B, 1233 S 23 (January 2, 1818).

survive the winters. During the long winters before the 1850s, nomadic tribes were distributed among Armenian and Kurdish villages by the Kurdish dynasties of Bayezid and Muş and the guardians of Kars and Van. It was the obligation of the peasantry to provide shelter, hay, and food to the tribesmen settled in their villages. Nomads, in return, were expected to pay a tax called the *kislakiye* to the yurtluk-ocaklık holder.[231] Although this was ostensibly to be shared among administrators and peasants, this was never the case. Thus, the practice of nomads wintering in villages was a corvée imposed on the peasantry in practice. Until the abolition of the yurtluk-ocaklık system in the mid-nineteenth century, this practice continued to be a burden on the peasantry on the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire.[232] It persisted even after its official abolishment in several districts of Van, Muş, and Bayezid.

3.1.2 The transformation of the frontier into a military zone

The gradual expansion of the Russian Empire in the Caucasus starting in the late eighteenth century as well as the conquest of Georgia and several Persian Khanates near the Russian frontier greatly threatened the Ottoman and Persian Empires.[233] Permanent, stable political rule in the Caucasus clearly depended on the support of local population, and in this political atmosphere the Ottoman, Russian, and Persian

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[231] BOA, HAT 721/34364 L, 29 Z 1248 (April 19, 1833) and BOA, HAT 722/34418 D, 29 Z 1249 (May 9, 1834), Emin Pasha, the mutasarrıf of Muş argues that collecting kışlakiyye tax from wintering nomads had been a long practice in his domain even practiced by his ancestors. See also Duman Koç, "Governing a Frontier Sancak in the Ottoman Empire," 68. British Consul James Brant argues that during the late 1830s this tax was also paid to the serasker. James Brant, "Notes of a Journey Through a Part of Kurdistan, in the Summer of 1838," 351-353. See also; Knight, "Armenia," in *Geography or the First Division of "The English Encylopedia"* (London Bradbury, Evans, & CO, 1866), 511.

[232] BOA, I.MSM 51/1334,(1848) *"mevsim-i şitânın hulûlünde takım takım kazaha-i mezkure karyelerine gelüb ahâlinin hanelerine girerek kendüleri ve hayvanlarının yem ve yiyeceklerini meccanen ahâliden ahzla altı ay kadar bu halle ikâmet etmekde"*

[233] For the military expansion of the Russian Empire in Caucasus, see Jersild, *Orientalism and Empire North Caucasus Mountain Peoples*, 12-37.

Empires all perceived local tribal groups as an important source of manpower for their armies. By promising tax immunities, sanctioning the authority of chiefs over the tribes, and even direct payments, imperial powers sought to keep tribes loyal or at least neutral. During the Russo-Persian War of 1804-1813 and the Russo-Ottoman War of 1806-1812, Russian military officials repeatedly made contact with Kurdish chiefs to obtain the loyalty of the tribes in the regions of Revan, Kars, and Bayezid.[234] Again during wars with the Persians and Ottomans in late 1820s, Russian military commanders including General Paskevich and Loris Melinkov made numerous attempts to win the loyalty of the borderland nomads or at least to ensure their neutrality during the course of the wars.

For the Ottomans and Persians, subjecthood and the loyalty of the nomads roaming Ottoman Kars and Bayezid and Persian Revan and Khoy was always a source of tension between the empires. As Russian military expansion turned into a real threat, both the Ottoman and Persian imperial powers insisted on the subjecthood of these nomads. When Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II was informed of the presence of large numbers of nomads wandering the northern sections of the Ottoman and Qajar borderland in 1822, he argued that accommodating these tribes in Ottoman territory would be a great benefit. He even proposed not to collect taxes from them.[235] Such tribal groups constituted an important proportion of Ottoman's irregular cavalries during the wars.

The story on the Persian side of the border differed slightly. Persian defeats during the Russo-Persian War of 1804 -1813 and the increasing presence of the Russian Empire in the Lesser Caucasus led Persian authorities to initiate certain

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[234] Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, 21-39.
[235] BOA HAT 825/37407, (1822) "*Vaki'â aşiret-ı merkume celb olunsa külli fâide olur. Kadim vergileri dahi alınmamak şartıyla celb mümkün ise hiç vergü dahi alınmasun*"

reforms concerning the organization of their army. Abbas Mirza, the prince and heir to the Qajar Dynasty, following his appointment as governor of the Province of Azerbaijan, engaged in building a new army modeled on those of Europe which was capable of stopping the territorial expansion of the Russian Empire.[236] The new army, *Nezam-e Jadid* (literally "new order") was formed soon after the *Nizâm-ı Cedid* of Selim III and was almost contemporary with the regular army of Muhammed Ali Pasha of Egypt. Having been trained by English military officers and composed of cavalry and infantry divisions equipped with modern technology, the new army strengthened the hand of Abbas Mirza in North and Northwestern Iran.[237] In line with the reform of the army, he drafted several Persian, Turcoman, and Kurdish tribes from Khanate of Revan as well as from Khoy, Tabriz, and other northwestern territories of the empire.[238] Fraser notes that in the district of Revan alone, the Kurds serving as cavalrymen in the new army numbered 2000 men who were commanded by the chief of the Zilan, Hüseyin Agha.[239] Abbas Mirza also imposed several taxes on the nomadic pastoral tribes to fund the increasingly costly, ongoing war.[240] Not coincidentally, in these years several tribes occupying Northwestern Iran started to flow into Ottoman realms. Russian military expansion and the presence of a centralist prince in Northwestern Iran directly challenged to the relative freedom that tribal groups had hitherto enjoyed.

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[236] Hambly, "Iran During the Reigns of Fath Ali Shah and Muhammad Shah," 150. See also: Amanat, *Iran, A Modern History*, 199, 217-218.
[237] Fraser, *Narrative of a Journey into Khorasan, in the years 1821 and 1822*, 226.
[238] Hambly, "Iran During the Reigns of Fath Ali Shah and Muhammad Shah," 159.
[239] Fraser, *Narrative of a Journey into Khorasan, in the years 1821 and 1822*, 227.
[240] BOA, HAT 811/37227 (April 11 1822).

3.2 The case of the Sepki and Haydaran tribes

The widespread conscription policy initiated by Crown Prince Abbas Mirza on the Persian side of the border as well as instability brought about by the advance of the Russian armies led several nomadic tribes on the Persian side of the border to flee into Ottoman territory. In the early 1810s, as Russian armies advanced towards the Khanate of Revan, a large party from the Sepki tribe under their chief, Suleiman Agha, fled to Ottoman territory.[241] However, as discussed in the previous chapter, despite their favorable pasturing grounds, the Ottoman territories on the northeastern frontier were not suitable for winter grazing. The Sepkis had to find proper villages in which to reside in winter and also hay, straw, and stables for their animals. These requirements forced the tribe to engage in a variety of political, economic, and military deals with frontier governors and the Kurdish dynasties of the Ottoman Empire. Upon their arrival, they were first allocated to the villages of Bayezid and then the villages of Van, where they spent two or three years. Finding Van insecure because of its proximity to the Persian border, the Sepkis then migrated further to the interior, to Muş, which was ruled by Mutasarrıf Selim Pasha, a member of Alaaddin Pashazade family.[242]

From the time of their arrival in Ottoman territory until 1817, Persian authorities initiated several diplomatic contacts with Ottoman frontier authorities to return the Sepki to Persia. In 1817, the khan of Revan, Hussein Quli Khan, sent several envoys to Selim Pasha, emphasized that the tribe were Persian subjects, and demanded their return to Persian territory. In response, fearing confrontation between

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[241] BOA, HAT 824/37401 F, (1817) "*Şimdi malum ola ki Sebki Aşireti ez kadim İran ili olub Rusyalu Revan üzerine geldüğü vakit firâren Muş ve Van taraflarına gelmiş idi*."

[242] BOA, HAT 782/36609, 1233 Z 29, (September 30 1818) "*fi'l asıl Bayezid'de iskan olunmuş aşâirden olub mukaddeme birkaç sene Van dahilinde ve bade dört beş sene Muş canibinde ikamet etmiş olan Sebki Aşireti"*

the Ottoman and Persian Empires and on account of the damage the Sepkis inflicted on the peasantry of Muş, Selim Pasha expelled the Sepkis from his domain.[243] Selim Pasha likely also feared military action against him by Abbas Mirza, the Qajar prince and governor of Azerbaijan. Having been expelled from Muş and unwilling to migrate back to Persia, the Sepkis sought new alliances as well as wintering spaces in Ottoman territory.

In their search for protection in the Ottoman Empire, the Sepki tribe could find no better ally than Derviş Pasha, the guardian (*muhafiz*) of Van. Derviş Pasha, who was a local notable of Van, acquired the guardianship of Van in 1806 after a fierce struggle with Feyzi Pasha, the previous guardian.[244] The Ottoman imperial capital was compelled to consent to Derviş Pasha's guardianship as he had local support and the capital feared further instability in the region. Yet as there were multiple claims on the guardianship of Van, Derviş Pasha found himself in constant competition and conflict with surrounding Kurdish dynasties, especially with Selim Pasha of Muş. Having come across a huge mobile military force in search of winter quarters and pasturing grounds, he did not hesitate to welcome the nomads of the Sepki into his domain. The Sepkis were given winter quarters in the vicinity of Van and Erciş as Derviş Pasha had already obtained the approval of the governor of Erzurum to receive these nomads in his domain.[245] Unsurprisingly, in ensuing years, Derviş Paşa benefited from the military power of the Sepkis in his conflicts with neighboring governors and dynasties. For instance, the Sepkis organized the wide

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[243] BOA, HAT 1227/47923 B, 1233 S 23 (January 2, 1818) "*Bundan akdem sancaklarımızda meştâ ve sahâbet eylediğimiz Sebki Aşireti ekradı etrâf ve enhâ ve kurb ve civârımızda vaki olan kaza ve kura ebnâ-yı sebil ve fukaranın emvâl ve mevaşi ve malik olduklarını gasb ve garet ve sirkat-ı birle itale-i dest-i teaddi ve hasarat etmiş olduğundan başka İran ekradıdır deyü defe'ât ile Revan serdârı celadetlü Hüseyin Han'ın elçianı tevârüd edüb Kürdümü ver diyerek nameler tevarüd eylemiş."*

[244] For a detailed account of the Derviş Pasha's revolt see Gencer, "Van Muhafızı Dervis Pasa Isyanı," 197-216. See also Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands,* 49-50.

[245] BOA, HAT 807/37185 B "*hin-i iktizada düşman ile mukatele ve mukabelede aşiret-i mezkur işe yarar kar güzar oldukları mülasebesiyle*"

scale plunder of the villages of Bulanık and Malazgirt, which were under the rule of Selim Pasha of Muş, in late 1817.[246]

Qajar authorities, however, were unwilling to concede such significant manpower to the Ottomans. The khan of Revan, Hussein Quli Khan, and the governor of Azerbaijan, Abbas Mirza, increased diplomatic pressure on Ottoman authorities insisting that the Sepki tribe belonged to the Qajar Empire and demanding its return to Persian territory. Though Persian authorities pressed him regarding the return of the Sepki, Derviş Pasha refused, claiming that the Sepkis were nomadic and wandered as they desired.[247] The appeals of Qajar authorities were in vain, so in late 1817, Persian authorities organized a military operation into Ottoman territory. The Persian armies moved in two directions. The first branch of the Persian army was commanded by Rahmetullah Khan and moved on Van to capture the castle of Mahmudi. The second was commanded by Hasan Khan (the brother of Hussein Quli Khan, the khan of Revan) and directed its attention on the Castle of Erciş where the entire Sepki tribe was seeking protection. The Persian army was unsuccessful on both fronts. The force under the command of Rahmetullah Khan was defeated in Van by the forces of Dervish Pasha and the Kurds of Mahmudi; moreover, the other branch did not succeed in capturing the Castle of Erciş.[248] Yet the damage to the Sepki was immense. As the Persian armies withdrew to Erevan, they rustled 70-80 thousand sheep and tens of thousands of the Sepki's cattle that were outside the castle.[249]

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[246] BOA, HAT 1227/47923 D, 1233 S 23 (January 2, 1818), The list includes large numbers of livestock and moveable properties being raided within villages of Malazgirt and Bulanık.
[247] BOA, HAT 782/36609 A, 1233 S 15 (December 25, 1817).
[248] Gencer, "Van Muhafızı Dervis Pasa Isyanı," 206-207.
[249] BOA, HAT 782/36609 A, 1233 S 15 (December 25, 1817), In another later document, the amount of raided livestock was stated as 120 thousand. See BOA, HAT 771/36186 D.

The Sepki were the center of tensions between Ottoman and Persian frontier authorities, but following these Persian military operations, Derviş Pasha was persona non grata among neighboring pashas and the Ottoman imperial center. When dismissed from his position, he engaged in open rebellion, and in 1819, a joint military operation was carried out by the governor of Erzurum and the mutasarrıf of Muş. Derviş Pasha's revolt was suppressed and he was executed in the course of the rebellion.[250] Following the suppression of the revolt, the Sepkis felt insecure in Ottoman territory and, under the leadership of Süleyman Agha, migrated back to the Khanate of Revan. Only a small group under the authority of Seyran Hanım and Ali Agha remained in the vicinity of Muş.

In 1819, Hüseyin Agha of the Zilan and Süleyman Ağa of the Sepki wrote several letters to Seyran Hanım, Huseyin Agha, and Ali Agha, the leaders of the remaining party of Sepkis in Ottoman territory. In these letters, they argued that if they returned to Persian territories, they would receive favorable treatment from the Khan of Revan, Huseyin Quli Khan. Most of these letters even argued that the entire Silvan (the regions of Bayezid, Hamur, and Eleşgirt) would be granted to them by the khan.[251] Yet Selim Pasha had no intention of returning the remaining Sepkis to the Persians. In one of his letters, he argued that the damage of the Sepki Kurds to sixteen villages of Bulanık had amounted to more than one thousand kese (purse) akçe, so he had no intention to hand the remaining Sepki families over to the Persians.[252] His clear intention was to extract the value of the plundered items from the remaining segments of the Sepki in Ottoman territory.

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[250] Gencer, "Van Muhafızı Dervis Pasa Isyanı," 215.
[251] BOA, HAT 769/36172, BOA, HAT 769/36172 F, BOA, HAT 769/36172 H, BOA, HAT 769/36172 J.
[252] BOA, HAT 769/36172 E.

While Süleyman Agha of the Sepki and Hüseyin Agha of the Zilan tried to convince the remaining Sepki to return, information arrived that 500 families of the Haydaran tribe under the leadership of Mehmed Ağa had crossed from the Persian side of the border into Ottoman territory. While these nomads were allocated among the villages of Muş in the domain of Selim Pasha, other segments of the tribe under the leadership of Kasım Agha remained in Persian Khoy near the Ottoman border. But not much later, in 1820, the remaining Haydaran nomads of Iran also migrated into Ottoman territory. Under the leadership of Kasım Agha, 1000 tents of the Haydaran tribe migrated and requested winter quarters in the environs of Muş and Malazgirt in the dominion of Selim Pasha.[253] As with the migration of the Sepkis, the migration of the Haydaran into Ottoman territory was not welcomed by Persian authorities. Soon after their migration, the khan of Revan, Hussein Quli Khan, wrote to Kasım Ağa calling the Haydaran back to Persian territory and threatening him with military action.[254]

The problems caused by the movement of the Sepki and Haydaran tribes across the boundaries of the Ottoman and Qajar Empires resulted in the emergence of a new official vocabulary regarding the subjecthood of these tribes. From the late 1810s onward, Ottoman and Qajar authorities began to refer to these tribes as *münâza fih* (those contested) with respect to their subjecthood and loyalty. The continuing insistence of Qajar authorities that the Haydaran and Sepki tribes were Persian subjects and had lived in the realm of Persian authorities for over 200 years

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[253] BOA, HAT 1/18G, 12 Ca 35 (Feburary 26, 1820), Şânî-zâde Mehmed 'Atâ'ullah Efendi, *Şânî-zâde Târîhî [Osmanlı Tarihi (1223-1237 / 1808-1821)]*, II, 999-1000. About the migration of the Haydaran into Ottoman lands see also; Kalantari, "Feth Ali Şah Zamanında Osmanlı-Iran Münasebetleri (1797-1834)," 115-120; Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands,* 50; Çiftçi, "Fragile Alliances in the Ottoman East," 104-115.

[254] BOA, HAT 4/108, 1235 (1820) "*Hayderanlu ilini ki iki yüz seneden beru İran eylatıdır, kaldırub Muş tarafına 'azim olacağınız da lakîn bilesiz ki şehzade efendimiz hiçbir nev'le bu işi kabul etmez ve beher tarik siz meyanede telef olursunuz ve Hayderanlu ili paymal olacakdır ne için siz iki devlet-i islam beyninde ihtilale bais olub kıyamete kadar halas olmayacaksız*"

led Ottoman authorities to investigate the origins of the borderland nomads. Starting in this period, the use of archives (*kuyud-ı kadime*) became an important aspect of the state-making, border-making, and identity-making processes of the Ottoman Empire. As Sabri Ateş points out, in the decades to follow, historical sources were consulted not only to determine the subjecthood of the disputed tribes but also with respect to the demarcation of the border dividing the Ottoman and Persian Empires.[255]

Investigations into the Ottoman archives unearthed several documents about the Sepki, Diyanlu, Hakkari, and Zilan tribes, but no conclusive source was found to prove the Ottoman heritage of the Haydaran tribe.[256] In the absence of such documents, Ottoman authorities also consulted local sources including oral testimonies. The governor of Erzurum and mutasarrıf of Muş cited local and oral sources to insist that the Haydaran tribe was originally Ottoman and had formerly lived in the region of Diyarbakır as part of the Şikaki Confederation.[257] For the early nineteenth century, it is implausible that these nomadic tribes had definite, steady loyalty to the Ottoman Empire, nor was there even a common belief that they have been part of the Şikaki Confederation of Diyarbekir in the sixteenth century. Even so, the idea that these tribes were not indigenous to the northeastern frontiers of the empire but had originally migrated from Ottoman districts further to the south was

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[255] Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands,* 96-97.
[256] BOA, HAT 1264/48943, 1234 Z 29 (October 19, 1819) "*Diyanlı ve Zilanlu ve Hakkari ve Sebki aşiretleri haklarında ber vech-i bala tevârih-i muhtelifede südûr eden evâmir-i aliyye mealiden müstedlel olduğuna nazaren aşâir-i mezkûre devlet-i aliyyeye tabii aşâirden olarak üzerlerine ol vechle bazı ahkâm cereyân etmiş olub ancak defterhane-i amirede vaki Haydarlu cemaati hâlâ Maraş Sancağında mevcud mudur yohsa tahrirden sonra Rakka tarafına varid olan dahi Muş havalisine geçmiş olarak Erzurum Valisi müşarileyhin sual eylediği Hayderi Aşireti bu mudur*"
[257] BOA, HAT 4/105A, 24 ZA 35 (September 2, 1820) *"Haydari Aşireti an asıl Diyarbekir Eyaletinde vaki Meyafarkin Sancağında sakin olub haremeyn-i şerifeyne tabi Şikaki Aşiretinin oymağı olduğu ve müddet-i mütemadiyeden berü terk-i vatan edub Muş ve Malazgirt ve Bayezid ve Erciş sancaklarına gelüb meşta olunub ve bazı senelerde dahi İran memalikinde Hoy ve Çors ülkalarında meşta olduklarından"*

highlighted by Ottoman officials as well as by the borderland tribes themselves because, in the 1820s, this identity and history better served their pastoral economy than being a 200-year-old Persian tribe.

While the debate over the subjecthood of borderland tribes continued, the Haydaran were given winter quarters in villages of the sanjak of Muş. Selim Pasha argued that the villages of his domain could not host such a large number of nomads and demanded that at least 200 tents be located in the villages of Erciş and Adilcevaz. The new guardian (*muhafiz*) of Van, Mahmud Pasha, however, strictly opposed Selim Pasha's proposition, claiming that the villages of Erciş and Adilcevaz had traditionally been the winter quarters of the Şikaki tribe for over 300 years and could not host any additional nomads. In addition, he claimed that the villages of these two districts had become increasingly depopulated due to famines that hit the region in previous years. According to him, since the number of peasant houses in the villages of Adilcevaz and Erciş had been reduced to only 3-5, wintering such a large number of nomads there would be a burden on the peasantry and inevitably lead to the emigration of those remaining from the region.[258]

In the cases of the Sepki and Haydaran tribes, migration to the Ottoman side of the border was shaped by political concerns. Political instability in Northwestern Persia as a result of the approaching Russian armies, as well as the attempts of Abbas Mirza to centralize conscription and taxation to cope with these advancing armies, led these nomadic tribes to flee to Ottoman territory where such centralizing attempts caused less suffering. These two cases importantly exemplify the nature of the relationships among nomads, Kurdish dynasties, and the peasantry. Nomads

[258] BOA, HAT 764/36076, 11 S 36 (November 18, 1820) *"aşiret-i merkûmenin bir hanesi kazaha-yı mezkûrana meşta verilmesi lazım gelürse fukara ve reâyanın bütün bütün perişan ve perankende olmasına muceb olur hâlâtdan olmağla"*

provided an important source of manpower to the Kurdish dynasties, and in return they received pasturing grounds and winter settlements. As these tribes were pastoral nomads, they had no permanent settlements in Ottoman territory and no knowledge of agricultural production. These tribes were defined as meşta-nişin aşâir (winter settling nomads) by the Ottoman officials. They were entirely dependent on the peasantry, since they used peasant houses for shelter during winter and obtained the basic needs of their livestock in winter – like straw and hay – from the peasantry. This relationship, though symbiotic, was obviously based on an unequal relation between pastoral nomads and the peasantry within the "feudal" structure. The quarrel between Selim Pasha and Mahmud Pasha was neither a simple matter of political dominance in the region nor a matter of tax revenues. Both mutasarrıfs also tried to maintain a balance between the nomad and peasant populations in their domains. As agricultural surplus comprised the largest part of the income of the Kurdish dynasties, neither desired the oppression of the peasantry by the nomads.

3.3 The Ottoman-Qajar War (1821-1823)

The protection given by Ottoman authorities to Sepki and Haydaran tribes and the mutual raids in which tribes and frontier governors engaged along the northern Ottoman-Persian border caused already tense relations between the Ottoman and Persia Empires to deteriorate.[259] The borderland became insecure as a result of the mutual raids. In April 1820, for instance, a large group consisting of citizens of Erzurum and Kars from various occupations and classes presented a collective petition to the governor of Erzurum. After drawing attention to the fragile nature of

[259] Şânî-zâde Mehmed 'Atâ'ullah Efendi, Şânî-zâde Târîhî [Osmanlı Tarihi (1223-1237 / 1808-1821)], II.

the provinces of Erzurum and Kars because of the presence of Kızılbaş (referring to Shia Muslims) and Kurds as well as its proximity to Russia and Persia, the petition accused Kurds of the khanate of Revan of plundering and carrying out numerous thefts in Kars and Erzurum.[260] Persian authorities likewise complained about the mistreatment of Persian merchants and pilgrims and the abduction of their properties in Erzurum by frontier Ottoman authorities.

In September 1820, a large Persian force under the command of Hasan Khan of Revan (brother of Hussein Quli Khan) entered Ottoman territory.[261] The aim, as expressed by Persian authorities, was to return the Haydaran tribe to Persia. Not much later, Selim Pasha informed central authorities that a regular, well-equipped Persian army of 30 thousand soldiers almost reached the outskirts of Muş having plundered several villages around Diyadin, Hamur, Eleşgird, Malazgirt, and Bulanık. He further stated that he had been able to stop the forces of Hasan Khan, but on their return, they pillaged several Armenian churches and villages.[262] Following this notification by Selim Pasha, Ottoman authorities called for the mobilization of forces in the eastern provinces, even as they maintained diplomatic relations.[263] In late 1820, the Ottomans demanded the withdrawal of Persian forces from Ottomans territory in accord with previous treaties signed between the countries. They further demanded the dismissal of the khan of Revan, Huseyin Quli Khan, as he was

[260] BOA, HAT 1/18A, (1820) Petitioners defined themselves as "*ulema ve suleha ve eimme ve hutebâ ve ayân ve eşrâf ve miralay ve yemin ve yesar, urban ve hisar ve yeniçeriyan-ı dergah-ı ali ve cebeciyan ve topcuyan ve top arabacıyan ve bi'l umum ahâli kulları*"
[261] BOA, HAT 825/37413 H, 11 Z 1235 (September 19, 1820).
[262] BOA, HAT 825/37413 J, 27 Z 1235, (October 5, 1820), "*Asakir ile serbâz dedikleri taalimlu nizam askeri ve top ve zemberek ve mühimmat çarhasıyla otuz bin mikdarı asker ile üzerimize gelüb*"
[263] BOA, HAT 1264/48946, (1820).

regarded as the main source of tensions between the two imperial powers.[264] But diplomatic efforts were unsuccessful as Qajar armies passed into Ottoman territory.

In 1821, several battles between Ottoman and Qajar armies took place along both the southern and northern borders. The well-trained, regular Persian army, which was equipped with modern armaments, was far more effective than that of the Ottomans which consisted largely of irregular forces recruited from the northern provinces of the empire.[265] In July 1821, Persian forces under the command of Hasan Khan advanced into Ottomans territory, captured the Plain of Bayezid and the Castle of Toprakkale, and defeated the irregular forces of Hüsrev Pasha, the governor of Erzurum, at the Battle of Eleşgirt.[266] Meanwhile, another division of the Persian army, under the command of Abbas Mirza, sieged the Castle of Bayezid and captured it with little difficulty.[267] Not much later, Persian armies also defeated the forces of Selim Pasha, the mutasarrıf of Muş, and forced him to retreat to the Castle of Muş.[268]

The several defeats of the Ottoman forces and the advance of the Qajar armies led many Kurdish dynasties on the frontier to reassess their allegiances. After witnessing the defeats of the Ottoman armies, a former mutasarrıf of Bayezid who had been dismissed, Behlül Pasha, expressed his allegiance to Abbas Mirza and was appointed as governor of Bayezid. Selim Pasha of Muş, on the other hand, played both sides. In letters written to the Ottoman imperial capital, he argued that he had succeeded in keeping 60-80 thousand well-equipped Persian soldiers out of his

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[264] BOA, HAT 1314/51258 A, 24 Safer 1236, (December 1, 1820) "*Evvela asâkir-i İraniyenin külliyen hudud-ı hakaniyeden çıkub min baid kataa hududa tecâvüz etmemeleri ve saniyen eğer tarafeynden bir güne hasarat vaki olur ise ber mukteza-i şurut beyne'ldevleteyn mamul olacağı, ve salisen ihtilat-ı umur-ı serhatdan Revan serdarın su-i sülük derkenarından neşet ettiğinden devleti tarafından serdar-ı merkumun tedib olunması*"
[265] Williamson, "The Turko-Persian War 1821–1823 Winning the War but Losing the Peace," 90.
[266] Kalantari, "Feth Ali Şah Zamanında Osmanlı-Iran Münasebetleri (1797-1834)," 133.
[267] Kalantari, "Feth Ali Şah Zamanında Osmanlı-Iran Münasebetleri (1797-1834)," 134.
[268] Kalantari, "Feth Ali Şah Zamanında Osmanlı-Iran Münasebetleri (1797-1834)," 138.

domain by engaging in negotiations and exchanging prisoners of war with the Persians.[269] But at the same time, he was sending letters to neighboring notables to deliver their castles to Abbas Mirza.[270] There was a common belief among the Ottoman governors that both Selim Pasha and Behlül Pasha had accepted Persian suzerainty.[271] Despite the successes of the Persian army, the severity of winter forced Abbas Mirza to leave the region in late 1821, leaving small forces in the castles that the Persians had occupied.

A second assault started in summer 1822. During the battle of Toprakkale, Ottoman forces were once again defeated. This time, Ottoman officials openly accused Selim Pasha of not having mobilized his cavalry to the front when it was needed.[272] In 1826, he would be executed for his defiance during the war as well as because of his problematic relationships with surrounding governors. As the Persian army prepared to siege Kars, a cholera epidemic hit the Persian army. Both Hasan Khan and Abbas Mirza withdrew to Persian territory, putting local governors in charge.[273] In late 1822, conciliatory letters started to arrive from the Persian side. In December 1822, Huseyin Khan of Revan sent a letter to the former governor of Bayezid, Hasan Pasha. After mentioning the need for a pact between the Ottoman and Persian Empires, he placed blame on the governors of Erzurum. He argued that bloodshed between two Muslim empires is not to be desired.[274]

The battles fought between 1820 and 1823 proved the value of a modernized army. The Qajar forces defeated the Ottoman army, which was composed mostly of

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[269] BOA, HAT 815/37283 B (1821).
[270] BOA, HAT 817/37302, 30 M 37 (October 27, 1821).
[271] BOA, HAT 826/37442 M, (1822).
[272] Kalantari, "Feth Ali Şah Zamanında Osmanlı-Iran Münasebetleri (1797-1834)," 153.
[273] BOA, HAT 788/36762, 29 Za 37 (August 17, 1822).
[274] BOA, HAT 818/37328, 17 Za 1237 (August 5, 1822). Prince Abbas Mirza also made a similar statement. See BOA, HAT 769/36168 F.

irregular and tribal forces, in several battles. As Sabri Ateş points out, "it was the emergence of cholera, mutual concerns about Russia's advance, the war in Greece, and pressure from Iranian merchants that traded with the Ottomans that pushed the two sides to bring an end to hostilities."[275] The Ottoman-Qajar War ended with the Treaty of Erzurum in 1823. After a series of meetings and mutual visits, both sides finally reached an agreement. Article 3 of the Treaty of Erzurum, which was to be known as the Kurdish article (*Ekrad maddesi)* in diplomatic circles in later decades, directly concerned the nomadic Haydaran and Sepki tribes. The article permitted the two tribes could stay where they were at the time, but they would have to be prevented from partaking in harassment in Persian territories. Moreover, they would not be prevented from returning to Persia if they desired, but Ottoman authorities would not allow them to return to Ottoman territory once they migrated to Persia.[276]

The Treaty of Erzurum (1823) far from provided stability and order to the Ottoman-Iranian border. Nor did it provide any resolution to "tribal problems" and their changing loyalties. The Haydaran and Sepki tribes continued to room Ottoman territory, and Persian authorities were clearly not content with the loss of this manpower. Following the Treaty of Erzurum, Iranian authorities proposed the return of either the Haydaran and Sepki tribes or the province of Baban to the Persians. The Ottomans rejected the ultimatum, and disputes over the tribes continued well into the mid-nineteenth century.[277]

Following the Treaty of Erzurum, numerous Haydaran nomads remained in the realm of the Ottoman Empire, though the question of their winter settlement in Ottoman territory remained unresolved. A great number of Haydaran and Sepki

[275] Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands,* 54.
[276] Efendi, *Vak'a-nüvîs Es'ad Efendi Tarihi*, 232-33.
[277] Kalantari, "Feth Ali Şah Zamanında Osmanlı-Iran Münasebetleri (1797-1834)."

families still wintered in the sanjak of Muş. Selim Pasha, the governor of Muş, insisted in his correspondence that the peasantry of Muş could not host such a large number of wintering nomads, and he demanded that some be allocated either to the villages of Erciş and Adilcevaz, in the domain of the new guardian of Van, Mahmud Pasha, or to Eleşgirt and Bayezid, in the domain of Mutasarrıf Behlül Pasha. The winter quarters of Haydaran nomads thus became a source of tension among the governors and other administrators of Muş, Van, and Bayezid and of a flow of correspondence between these governors and the imperial state in 1824.

Selim Pasha's insistence that the Haydaran nomads allocation to Erciş and Adilcevaz, two northern districts of Van, was not welcomed by the new guardian of Van, Mahmud Pasha. Erciş and Adilcevaz were the main sources of revenue for the guardians of Van. In correspondence dated 17. December 1823, Mahmud Pasha stated that while Muş, Malazgirt, and Hınıs, which were under the rule of Selim Pasha, consisted of 500 villages, the villages of Van in his domain had become depopulated and had already been given as winter quarters to the Şikaki tribe. He further claimed that the peasant villages of Erciş and Adilcevaz had hosted Haydaran nomads the previous two years and that feeding such a number of nomads had turned into an unbearable burden in winter. According to him, Selim Pasha's insistence that the Haydaran be relocated derived from his own desire to control Erciş and Adilcevaz. Selim Pasha had already located nomadic tribes in Adilcevaz and Erciş, and he had managed to collect the tithe from fifteen villages in the vicinity through the agency of the Haydaran tribe. Mahmud Pasha further stated that if these nomads were allocated to Erciş and Adilcevaz, he could not continue in his post as guardian of Van since he would be unable to collect the revenues necessary for the

maintenance of his work.[278] In another letter, he argued that the villages of Adilcevaz and Erciş, which were in his domain, were already being used by several other nomadic tribes, were depopulated and ruined by the recent war with the Persians, and could no longer host any more wintering nomads. He further stated that the districts of Muş, Hınıs, and Tekman, which were under the command of Selim Pasha as yurtluk-ocaklık or mukataa, had that capacity.[279]

Selim Pasha, on the other hand, insisted on the allocation of at least some segments of the Haydaran tribe to the villages of Erciş and Adilcevaz. In one correspondence, he stated that following their arrival in Ottoman territory, a few thousand Haydaran nomads had been allocated to villages in his domain. Yet they had become a burden on both the peasantry and those nomads who traditionally used the villages of Muş as their winter quarters. He also stated that the villages were in ruin and both the peasantry and the local tribes had lost most of their livestock to the wintering nomads. Although he recognized the importance of the Haydaran nomads as devoted soldiers, the peasantry of his domain could no longer bear such a significant number of wintering nomads. He argued that they should either be given quarters elsewhere or should be allowed to leave for the Qajar Empire.[280]

The third participant in this debate, Behlül Pasha, who was the yurtluk-ocaklık holder of the sanjak of Bayezid, also opposed the allocation of Haydaran and Sepki nomads in his domain. Mentioning the dispersal of the peasantry and the depopulation and miserable conditions of the sanjak of Bayezid, he argued that villages in his domain were not prosperous (*şenlik*) and could not host even 50 families of nomads during the winter. Like Mahmud Pasha, he also argued that

[278] BOA, HAT 801/37093 A, 1239 Ra 13 (December 17, 1823).
[279] BOA, C.DH 125/6216, 29.4.1241 (December 11, 1825).
[280] BOA, HAT 445/22266 A, 1239 B 07 (March 8, 1824).

Selim Pasha's wish to locate Sepki and Haydaran nomads in Bayezid derived from the desire to expand his influence.[281]

Conflicting correspondence from these district governors delayed the decision regarding the allocation of the tribes. The governor of Erzurum and Commander of the Eastern Front, Rauf Pasha, argued that the only villages that were suitable as winter quarters for the incoming nomads were Bayezid, Eleşgirt, Kığı, Çapakçur, Erciş, and Adilcevaz. Yet Bayezid and Eleşgirt were far from prosperous, and Kığı and Çapakçur were already being used by local tribes. Erciş and Adilcevaz, on the other hand, could be used as temporary winter quarters until the villages of Eleşgirt and Bayezid were repopulated and became prosperous.[282] In 1826, some Haydaran nomads remained in Muş, Erciş, and Adilcevaz under their chief, Sultan Agha, while others, under the leadership of Kasım Agha, migrated back to Khoy in Iran. Just as the nomads of the Sepki were divided, some segments remained in Muş and others migrated to Erevan.

The problems regarding the winter quarters of nomads who remained in Ottoman territory occupied an important place on the agenda of the late 1820s and early 1830s. In early 1830s, there were still a thousand tents of Haydaran nomads wintering in Muş under Sultan Agha. In 1833, when the governor of Erzurum, Esad Pasha, and the new mutasarrıf of Muş, Emin Pasha, engaged in a dispute regarding the fiscal organization of the sanjak, it became apparent that Haydaran nomads were paying large amounts of cash to Emin Pasha in the name of a wintering tax (*kislakiye*).[283] Emin Pasha, like his predecessors, had allocated the villages of Muş for the use of the remaining Haydaran and provided grain for their animals. In return,

[281] BOA, C.DH 123/6109, R 1240 (November 1824).
[282] BOA, HAT 901/39612 27, (January 1824).
[283] HAT 721/34364 L, 29 Z 1248 (19 May 1833).

he collected almost twelve hundred kese akçe in the name of this wintering tax.[284] This amount was also a source of disagreement between Ottoman and Persian authorities since Sultan's elder brother, Kasım Agha, complained about the taxes being extracted from the Haydaran. Taxing a disputed tribe was a clear violation of the Treaty of Erzurum. Persian authorities demanded not only the return of the amount paid by the Haydaran but also of the tribe itself. It is not clear whether Emin Pasha repaid the taxes collected from the tribe since that same year he embarked on a large-scale rebellion against the Ottoman authorities.[285] Nevertheless, Sultan Agha and some segments of the Haydaran managed to remain in Ottoman territory until late 1830s.[286]

3.4 The case of the Zilan: A borderland confederation

During the first quarter of the nineteenth century, when the subjecthood of the Haydaran and Sepki were officially considered to be in dispute by Ottoman and Persian authorities, the Zilan were still considered Persian because of the chief's loyalty to and close relations with the khan of Revan, Hussein Quli Khan.[287] Until the Russian occupation of Revan in 1827, the chiefs and families of the Zilan mostly remained in the Khanate of Revan, although some among them used winter quarters and summer pastures in Ottoman Kars and Bayezid. The conscription policies of Abbas Mirza did not directly challenge the Zilan, as they were generally lived in the domain of Hussein Quli Khan who, as the khan of Revan, enjoyed a degree of independence from the policies of Abbas Mirza.[288]

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[284] Duman Koç, "Governing a Frontier Sancak in the Ottoman Empire," 67-68.
[285] For the revolt of Emin Pasha, see Duman Koç, "Governing a Frontier Sancak in the Ottoman Empire," 73-112.
[286] Aykun, "Erzurum Konferans (1843-1847) ve Osmanlı-Iran Hudut Antlaşması," 160.
[287] Morier, *A Second Journey Through Persia, Armenia, and Asia Minor*, 318-319.
[288] Fraser, *Narrative of a Journey into Khorasan, in the years 1821 and 1822*, 227.

During the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the chief of the Zilan, Hüseyin Agha became one of the powerful actors along the northern section of the Ottoman-Persian border. By forming and maintaining military, political, and matrimonial bonds with frontier governors of both the Ottoman and Qajar Empires as well as smaller clans and tribes of the region, he not only secured access to winter quarters and summer pastures on both sides of the border but also strengthened his prestige and military power among the tribes of the Ottoman-Persian borderland. In this period, Hüseyin Agha successfully integrated several local tribes into his tribal confederation and established sole authority over them. In the late 1810s and early 1820s, he was reputed to be the chief of all the Kurdish tribes (*ağavat ağası*) along the northern border, including the Cemaldinî, Cunukî/Cünükanlı, and Kaskî/Kaskanlı – and even some segments of the Celali, Haydaran, and Sepki, whose number reached almost five thousand households.[289]

As a pastoral nomadic tribe, the Zilan owned large numbers of sheep. The tax registry of the Khanate of Revan indicates that some two thousand families of Zilan owned approximately 100 thousand sheep and large numbers of oxen.[290] The economic activities of this nomadic pastoral tribal confederation were exclusively based on animal husbandry. Some adapted themselves to a more settled way of life and engaged in agricultural production in Aras valley, though these were limited in number.[291] During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the pastoral

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[289] HAT 811/37227, (11 April 1822) "*Zikr olunan Silvanlı Aşireti meşhur olan Zilanlı Aşireti ve Şemdin Aghazadelerden Hüseyin Ağa elyevm beyleri olub Revan toprağında sakinlerdir. Bazı oymaklarıyla iki bin ve ağalığı mumaileyh Hüseyin Ağa'da olan Celali Aşireti dahi iki bin mikdarı adem olduğu ve yine Zilanlıya tabi olan Haydaranlı Bedri Ağa ile İran tarafından üç yüz kadar ve Cemadanlı takımının altıyüz mikdarı evleri olub*" Because of his service to the Khan of the Revan, he also bore the reputation of "*Iranlının medar-ı itinâsı*" See BOA, 827/37455, 19 S 36 (November 26, 1820)

[290] Nikitine, *Les Kurdes; Etude Sociologique et Historique*, 143. I.P., *Ocherki po istorii feodal'nykh otnosheniy v Azerbaijane,* 313.

[291] Bournoutian, "Eastern Armenia on the Eve of the Russian Conquest," 55.

habitat of the Zilan was along the northern section of the Ottoman-Persian border. Many wintered in Ottoman Kars and Persian Revan (current day Erevan in Armenia) along both sides of the Aras River. Their summer grazing lands, on the other hand, were the slopes of Mount Ağrı and the Sinekî pastures to the south and Alagöz in the north.[292]

Despite close relations with Persian authorities, Hüseyin Agha placed great value on maintaining good relations with the frontier authorities of the Ottoman Empire. The well-being of the pastoral economy clearly depended on such relations as the Zilan needed access to pasturing grounds in the Ottoman Empire for their livestock. One way to achieve this was matrimonial relations with frontier governors and notables. One of Hüseyin Agha's daughters married Abdulhamid Pasha, a local Kurdish notable of Eleşgirt, on the Ottoman side of the border. He would, for a short period of time, manage to become governor (*mutasarrıf*) of the Ottoman district of Bayezid in the early 1820s.[293] On the Persian side of the border, Hüseyin Agha had familial ties with Hussein Quli Khan, the serdar of Revan.[294] He also had matrimonial ties with the chiefs of smaller Kurdish tribes like the Kaskanlı, which was part of his larger confederation.[295]

Another way of achieving a network of power and wealth across borders was concerned military capacity and the ability to mobilize large numbers of cavalrymen. Petrushevsky argues that the Zilan submitted one tenth of its tribal members as soldiers to the khan of Revan.[296] Fraser, who visited the Khanate of Revan in the 1820s, claimed that two thousand Kurdish cavalrymen were serving in the Persian

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[292] Bournoutian, "Eastern Armenia on the Eve of the Russian Conquest," 56-57; BOA, HR SYS 1335/45, (1853).
[293] BOA, HAT 767/36133, 7 N 36, (June 8, 1821).
[294] Morier, *A Second Journey Through Persia, Armenia, and Asia Minor*, 394.
[295] BOA, HAT 816/37301 C, (1823).
[296] I.P., *Ocherki po istorii feodal'nykh otnosheniy v Azerbaijane*, 313.

army under the command of Hüseyin Agha.[297] The Zilan also fought in the Persian army in battles fought in Herat, Yazd, and Khorasan.[298]

Through his relationships on both sides of the border, Hüseyin Agha also secured the revenue streams of several villages in Ottoman Kars and Persian Revan. In the 1820s, while he held five villages as teyul in the Khanate of Revan,[299] he also benefited from the tithes of twelve tımars in Kars within the borders of the Ottoman Empire.[300] His power, influence, and wealth and his network of relations across the boundaries of two empires made him a true borderland elite – an important power broker among various tribal groups and imperial states. As mentioned in the previous section, during the late 1810s, Hüseyin Agha, acted as an intermediary between Persian authorities and Kurdish tribes that had fled to the Ottoman Empire and tried to convince them to return to Persian territories. Such roles undoubtedly increased his political and social prestige.

As mentioned before, large numbers of Zilan families lived in Persian Revan, but some segments wintered in the villages of Kağızman, a district administratively tied to Ottoman Kars, while some other segments pastured in the district of Ottoman Bayezid. The right to use these winter quarters clearly depended on the permission of the frontier governors of the Ottoman Empire or on the nature of the contracts between the governors and the tribal chiefs. Indeed, it was such relationships that made the borders porous in nature. For the nomadic tribes, safe access to pasturing grounds and winter quarters were vital. Yet migrations were not always safe at moments of political tension between nomads and frontier pashas. In 1814, as

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[297] Fraser, *Narrative of a Journey into Khorasan, in the years 1821 and 1822*, 227.
[298] Foreign Office 424/7B, Protocol of the Fifteenth Conference, Procès-Verbal de la Quinzième Conférence, qui eut lieu a Erzeroum le 6 février, 1844, pour l'Exposition des Réclamations turco-persanes, February 6th 1844, 152.
[299] Bournoutian, "Eastern Armenia on the Eve of the Russian Conquest," 146-147.
[300] BOA, HAT 813/37254 A, 25 Ca 1241 (January 5, 1826) and BOA, HAT 602/29452, (1827).

seventy families of the Zilan under Chief Cafer Agha (the cousin of Hüseyin Agha) were wintered in Ottoman Bayezid, İbrahim Paşa, the mutasarrıf of Bayezid plundered 8000 small and 800 large animals from their livestock. More than 1000 sheep of the same tribe were plundered in Kağızman in a similar way by Hatunoğlu Kara Bey, the mutasarrıf of Magazberd.[301] These were never recovered. In the following years, Hüseyin Agha of the Zilan waited for the right moment to change the political configuration of the region in a way to secure access to pasturing grounds and winter quarters on the Ottoman side of the border.

In 1820, such favorable conditions emerged. The Ottoman imperial capital decided to replace the district governor of Bayezid, Behlül Pasha, as he had been accused of pursuing relations with Qajar authorities at a time when Ottoman and Qajar relations had deteriorated because of border-violating migrations by the nomadic tribes.[302] Behlül Pasha was replaced with Abdulhamid Pasha who had until that time governed Eleşgirt, probably as a yurtluk-ocaklık. Behlül Pasha and his range of supporters in Bayezid were not content with the decision, and not much later, supporters of both pashas lobbied by preparing several collective petitions.[303] Behlül Pasha had no intention of leaving the castle of Bayezid to the new mutasarrıf; hence, when the replacement of Behlül Pasha required military force, Hüseyin Agha, the chief of the Zilan, came into scene. It was with the support of Hüseyin Agha that Abdulhamid Pasha managed to defeat the forces of Behlül Pasha and assume his new position.[304]

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[301] HAT 804/37129 E, (1814).
[302] Şânî-zâde Mehmed 'Atâ'ullah Efendi, *Şânî-zâde Târîhî [Osmanlı Tarihi (1223-1237 / 1808-1821)]*, II, 1016-1017.
[303] For an account of the conflict between Abdulhamid Pasha and Behlül Pasha, see Karataş, *Bayezid Sancağı ve İdarecileri (1700-1914)*, 58.
[304] *Bayezid Sancağı ve İdarecileri (1700-1914)*, 59.

Clearly, the support of Hüseyin Agha was not unconditional. Through such support, he sought to guarantee his tribal members free access to summer pastures located in the district of Bayezid and winter quarters located in Kağızman. Nomads who fluidly crossed the borders of the Qajar and Ottoman Empires needed the approval of frontier governors and local Kurdish dynasties to access summer pastures and winter quarters in their jurisdiction. Matrimonial relations with the family of Abdulhamid Pasha increased the influence of the Zilan tribe in Ottoman territory. Not coincidentally, the governor of Erzurum, Hüsrev Pasha, warned the imperial capital of the growing influence of the Zilan in the districts of Eleşgirt and Bayezid. The Ottoman imperial capital, which had just replaced Behlül Pasha because of his close relations with Qajar authorities, found itself in an even more difficult position. From the perspective of Ottoman governors, the presence of Abdulhamid Pasha in Bayezid and the growing influence of the Zilan in Ottoman territory were clear indications of Qajar influence in the region. Not much later, Ottoman frontier authorities began to implement a policy opposed to the Zilan.

In December 1820, Ottoman frontier authorities organized a military operation against seventy nomadic Zilan families wintering in the villages of Kağızman. Ali Pasha, the guardian of Kars, argued that Persian tribes had no right to use lands in the Ottoman Empire.[305] Upon the arrival of the army, the nomads at first refused to leave the villages claiming that they were wintering there under the order of Hussein Quli Khan, the guardian of Revan, and would only leave upon his order (*bizi meştaya Revan serdârı gönderdi serdârın emri olmadıkça çıkmayuz*). The Ottoman authorities forcibly expelled the Zilan nomads from the villages of

[305] BOA, HAT 444/22247, 1236 R 1 (December 7, 1820), "*İran tebası olan ekradın mülk-ü şahânede kışlakda olmaları halen ve kabilen muhazirden salim olmayub tahtında mazarrat derkar olduğundan ekrad-ı merkumenin mülk-i şahâneden ihraç ve irtigacları elzem idüğü*"

Kağızman claiming that they were not Ottoman but Persian subjects. Those who resisted were captured and punished as a warning to other nomads who might attempt to cross the border.[306] Moreover, their livestock and property were confiscated by the army. Following their expulsion, Abdulhamid Paşa, the newly appointed mutasarrıf of the sanjak of Bayezid, wrote to the Ottoman imperial center, argued that these Zilan nomads were in his domain (*nezd-i çakeri*), and demanded compensation for their losses.[307]

This case gives hints about the atmosphere of the Ottoman-Persian frontiers and the political and economic relations of the people inhabiting them before the mid-nineteenth century. First, it indicates the degree to which the subjecthood of the borderland pastoral nomadic tribes was contested. The Zilan tribe asserted that they were wintering in Kağızman region, an Ottoman district, with the permission of the khan of Revan. The governor of Kars expelled the Zilan nomads from Ottoman "territory" because he regarded them as a Persian tribe; meanwhile, the mutasarrıf of the sanjak of Bayezid regarded them as an Ottoman tribe and assumed their protection.

Under such conditions, it is unsurprising that the Zilan actively supported the Qajar armies during the Ottoman-Qajar war of 1821-1823, fighting against Ottoman troops in several battles in the districts of Bayezid, Eleşgirt, and Muş.[308] The reason for their support was obviously related to Hüseyin Agha's conflict with Ottoman frontier authorities and his desire to reshape the political configuration of the region. Once the war between these two empires came to an end with the Treaty of Erzurum, the Ottoman frontier governors developed a stricter policy vis-à-vis tribes loyal to the

[306] BOA, HAT 444/22247, 1236 R 1 (December 7, 1820).
[307] BOA, HAT 767/36133 A, 1236 R 17 (December 17, 1820).
[308] Kalantari, "Feth Ali Şah Zamanında Osmanlı-Iran Münasebetleri (1797-1834)."

Qajar Empire during the war. Ottoman authorities tried to develop good relations with the Haydaran and Sepki tribes since large numbers from these tribes had accepted Ottoman subjecthood. But at the same time, they tried to keep the Zilan out of Ottoman territories as much as possible.

In late 1825, the Ottoman imperial capital became aware that the chief of the Zilan, Hüseyin Agha, and his kin were benefiting from the revenues of several tımars in the vicinity of Kars. The governor of Erzurum was ordered to prevent their access to such villages in Ottoman territory.[309] The *timar* villages of Hüseyin Agha subsequently led a barrage of correspondence between the Ottoman and Persian Empires. Hasan Agha, the Persian envoy in Erzurum, emphasized the freedom that Ottoman subjects enjoyed over their properties in Persia and demanded that Ottoman authorities recognize the rights of the Zilan over these villages.[310] Galip Pasha, on the other hand, argued that in Ottoman lands, the owners of orchards, gardens, and estates were also immune from government intervention, but tımars differed from these types of property as they were used to pay the salaries of soldiers. Indeed, there were similar land grants in the Qajar Empire.[311]

Soon letters also arrived from different administrative circles of Qajar Empire. Prince Abbas Mirza and Hussein Khan asserted that the chief of the Zilan, Hüseyin Agha, had purchased these villages and only benefited from the tithes of the villages.[312] Hussein Khan stated that until then it had been perceived as a problem

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[309] BOA, HAT 451/22372, 07 3 1241 (October 20, 1825).
[310] BOA, HAT 451/22372, 07 3 1241 (October 20, 1825) "*Erzurum ahalisinden birisi mesela Tebriz'de bir mülk alsa mutasarrıf olur mümanaat olunmaz ve devlet-i aliyyede emlakı arazisi yine miriye aid olub iranda şah hiç karışmaz*"
[311] BOA, HAT 451/22372, 07 3 1241 (October 20, 1825) "*Bağ ve bağçe ve çiftlik misllü emlaka canib-i devlet-i aliyyeden dahi müdahale olunmayub ashabı keyfa yeşa mazbut ve tevrat eder lakin bunlar kablden olmayub saltant-ı seniyyenin kanunu muktezasınca askerin nanparesidir*"
[312] BOA, HAT 811/37218, 07 11 1241 (June 17, 1826) "*Taraf-ı bendegiye gönerdiği kağıdında bunlar satun almışlardır eba an ced bu tımarlara mutasarrıfdırlar ve timar köylerinin aşarından gayrı bir neseneye taaruzları yokdur*"

neither by the governors of Erzurum nor by the guardians of Kars.[313] In response, Galip Pasha stressed that Persians have no right to intervene in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire and argued that according to Ottoman law, timar villages could not be held by foreigners as they were used to finance the salaries of Ottoman soldiers. Besides, timar holders were required to live in the villages; the villages of absentees were granted to new holders.[314] Later, an investigation into the timar registers of the Kağızman and Şuragel districts was ordered which revealed that twelve timar villages were either sold or granted to the chief of Zilan tribe and his relatives by the governor of Erzurum, Numan Pasha, in the early nineteenth century.[315]

In the summer of 1826, Ottoman governors ordered that the collection of the taxes of these villages by the Zilan tribe be stopped, yet Hüseyin Agha had already collected the revenues (*hasılat*). Galip Pasha knew that the Persians would insist on the restitution of the money if the Zilan tribe were expelled from the villages. He proposed direct communication with Prince Abbas Mirza to hasten the process and to recover the money locally within three months. It is not clear whether Ottomans made payments to Hüseyin Agha, but the twelve villages were later confiscated by the Ottoman state treasury and used to pay the salaries of the soldiers of Kars.[316]

The confiscation of the timar villages of the Zilan was related to both the new border reality as well as the centralizing trend of the Ottoman Empire's land regime. The wars fought in this frontier landscape during the nineteenth century forced nomads to choose and ally with one of the empires, which were the moments when

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[313] BOA, HAT 811/37218, 07 11 1241 (June 17, 1826).
[314] BOA, HAT 811/37218, 07 11 1241 (June 17, 1826).
[315] BOA, HAT 602/29452, 1243 (1828), "*Bunlar mukaddema Koca Numan Paşa zamanlarında Kars eyaletinde mütemekkin oldukları esnada zikr olunan timarların bazısını akçeleriyle satun almış ve bazılarını dahi Paşa-yı mumaileyha vermiş*"
[316] BOA, HAT 329/19075, 1250 (1835).

the porous nature of the borders disappeared. Tensions between the Ottomans and Persians forced such borderland tribes to suffer as they lost access to resources on both sides of the border. The confiscation of the timar villages was the beginning of a number of developments that would force the Zilan into a corner. But the confiscation of these villages was also a sign of a more centralized land regime in the empire. The imperial capital clearly sought to benefit from hitherto untouched, neglected, and misused revenues by reclaiming the timars. And while the Zilan lost an important source of revenue, the occupation of the Khanate of Revan during the Russo-Persian war of 1826-1828 was the most important development that affected the Zilan Confederation.

3.5 Russo-Persian (1826-1828) and Russo-Ottoman Wars (1829)

The Russian policy of expansion in the Lesser Caucasus and the Persian intent to reconquer lands lost to the Russians brought these two empires back into war in 1826. Despite several Persian military successes in the early phases of the war, Russian armies under the command of General Paskevich conquered the Persian territory of Revan in 1827 and forced the Persians to accept the terms of surrender in the Treaty of Turkmençay (1828).

During the course of the Russo-Persian war, the Zilan and several other Kurdish tribes allied with the Persians and fought against the Russian Empire. Others left the region and migrated to Ottoman territory for fear of Russian atrocities.[317] In August 1827, before the fall of the castle of Revan to the Russians, Hüseyin Agha himself contacted Osman Pasha, the mutasarrıf of Kars, and requested asylum and

[317] BOA, HAT, 772/36207, 42 (1827) "*Serdarabad mehazisinde kürd atlusu mukabele edüb biraz muhadebe etmişler ise de … Revan'ın bir tarafında şenlik eseri kalmayub gerek aşiret ve gerek sair yerlü reaya vesair hanelerini nehr-i Arası imrar ile Bayezid tarafında ve ol-havaliye göçürmüşler*"

land for himself and his tribe, arguing that he had no hope that the Persians could stop Russian expansion.[318] Despite the insistence of Osman Pasha that the Zilan be accepted in Ottoman territory and his emphasis on their manpower, the Ottoman imperial capital was reluctant and feared renewed tensions with the Qajar Empire. Nevertheless, in the end, the Zilan traversed the border into Ottoman Muş.[319] Following the Treaty of Turkmençay (1828), the borders of the Russian, Ottoman, and Persian empires intersected at Mount Ağrı, dividing the lands used by Zilan, and Celali into three.

The conquest of Revan by the Russian Empire resulted in the emigration of a large portion of the Kurdish tribes into Ottoman territory. Just before the war, the Kurdish population of Revan was some twenty-five thousand. A Russian survey in 1836 indicates that this population had been reduced to some 4000.[320] Averyanov points out that the reason for the migration of the Kurdish tribes from Revan into Ottoman territory following its annexation by the Russians was related to the peculiarities of Russian rule. Compared to the Ottoman and Persian governments, he states, the Russian Empire would not allow the Kurdish tribes to act independently.[321] Not only Kurdish tribes but also several Turkish tribes, like the Ayramlu and the Karapapaks, appealed to the Ottoman frontier governors and demanded refuge in Ottoman territory. The war not only resulted in mass migration into the Ottoman Empire but also lengthened the boundary between the Ottoman and

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[318] BOA, HAT 1051/43286 H, 5 RA 43 (September 26, 1827) "*Revandan ve İranlunun Rusyalu ile başaçıkacaklarından meyus ve katt-ı ümid etmiş olarak hakpay-ı aliyye-i rahimânelerine ilticâdan halet etmek ümidiyle*"
[319] Foreign Office 424/7B, Protocol of the Fifteenth Conference, Procès-Verbal de la Quinzième Conférence, qui eut lieu a Erzeroum le 6 février, 1844, pour l'Exposition des Réclamations turco-persanes, February 6th, 1844.
[320] Bournoutian, "Eastern Armenia on the Eve of the Russian Conquest," 56-59.
[321] Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, 51.

Russian Empires from Ahısha to Bayezid, which further concerned Ottoman authorities.[322]

After defeating the Qajars and signing the Treaty of Turkmençay, the Russian armies were directed toward Ottoman territory. There were already tensions on the Balkan front. The Greek War of Independence had started in 1821 in Morea, Ottoman attempts to suppress the movement and their rejection of any compromise led the Russians to intervene on behalf of the Greek independence movement – and to the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-1829.[323] The consequences of the war were as devastating for the northeastern territory of the empire as for the Balkans. It resulted in the migration of large numbers of Armenian peasants to Russia – either forcibly or voluntarily – and it disrupted the pastoral economy and migration patterns of the nomadic tribes along the northern borders of the Ottoman and Persian Empires. Travelogues and Ottoman sources submit that the populations of the towns and villages of Northeastern Anatolia had drastically decreased following the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-1829. The town of Bayezid was in ruins and its population was reduced to only 400-500 houses.[324] James Fraser, a traveler passing through the region, noted that nearly ten thousand Armenians were taken from the sanjak of Bayezid to Russia by Russian soldiers following the war. As a frontier town, it would never regain its former prosperity and power.[325]

The Russo-Turkish War of 1828-1829 was fought on two fronts: the Balkans and Northeastern Anatolia. On the Anatolian front, Russian armies under the command of General Paskevich captured the cities of Akhaltsikhe, Kars, Bayezid,

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[322] BOA, HAT 804/37130 C, 11 R 43 (November 1, 1827).
[323] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 31-35.
[324] Smith and Dwight, *Missionary Researches in Armenia* 415.
[325] Fraser, *A Winter's Journey From Constantinople to Tehran with Travels Through Various Parts of Persia* 1, 313-319.

and Erzurum in a series of battles fought between 1828 and 1829.[326] According to Allen and Muratoff, while advancing in Anatolia, one of Paskevich's aims was to maintain peaceful relations with the Persians and insure the neutrality of the Kurdish tribes of the region.[327]

This policy of Paskevich was partly successful. Some of the Kurdish tribes of the borderland remained in contact with both the Ottoman and Russian Empires during the war and remained mostly neutral, as they would in wars later in the century. William Monteith argues that much of the Ottoman army on the battlefields of the Caucasus were composed of irregular Kurdish cavalrymen, yet, many of them became neutral with the influence of Russian agents.[328] Likewise, Averyanov, indicates that many Kurdish tribes and local households generally remained neutral or act according to the course of the war.[329] What is clear is that tribes and local households acted in line with their own agendas and benefits. They remained either neutral or gave promises to both Ottoman and Russian authorities during the course of the war.

During the course of the war, Russians tried to establish contact with Kurdish dynasties and tribes to obtain their support or at least secure their neutrality during their advance into Ottoman territory.[330] Russian military officials, sent several letters to Süleyman Agha of the Sepki[331] and Huseyin Agha of the Zilan[332] to win their support and submission. Tsar Nicholas even decided to send General Paskevich 100 thousand chervontsy to win over the Kurds.[333] These Russian stratagems were not

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[326] Allen and Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields*; Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi, *Vak'anüvîs Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi Tarihi*, II-III, 370-374.
[327] Allen and Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields*, 44.
[328] Monteith, *Kars and Erzurum*, 231.
[329] Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, 65-79.
[330] Bitis, *Russia and the Eastern Question*, 322.
[331] BOA, HAT 1032/42881 B, (1828).
[332] BOA, HAT 1032/42881 A, (1828).
[333] Bitis, *Russia and the Eastern Question*, 322.

entirely unsuccessful. Although the tribes did not actively support the Russian armies, they kept out of the confrontation. Averyanov argues that Süleyman Agha of the Sepki, Hüseyin Agha of the Zilan, and Emin Pasha, the mutasarrıf of Muş who was a member of the Alaaddin Pashazade family, promised loyalty to the Russian authorities during the early phases of the war.[334] Monteith also mentions close relations between Russian officials and Hussein Agha of the Zilan.[335] However, in later phases of the war Emin Pasha and some of the Kurdish tribes fought alongside the Ottoman armies in some of the local battles against Russians.[336] Despite the promises given by the Zilan to Russian military officials in the early phases of the war, it is dubious that they effectively supported Russian armies in later phases of the war. They most probably decided to remain neutral.

The war, however devastated the northeastern frontier region of the Ottoman Empire. Due to the insecurity of the Ottoman borderland, the Zilan tribe migrated back to the city of Khoy in the Persian Empire. Later, in 1843, the chief of the tribe, Hüseyin Agha, mentioned in a petition to the governor of Erzurum that they had had to migrate to Persia as the war had devastated the entire northeastern territory of the Ottoman Empire.[337] Three wars fought among the Russian, Ottoman, and Persian empires between 1820 and 1830 had ruined the pastoral habitat of the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran nomads. In the 1830s, segments of these tribes were dispersed among the lands of the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires and found themselves in confrontation with expanding state power on the frontier.

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[334] Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, 65-67.
[335] Monteith, *Kars and Erzurum*, 264.
[336] Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, 70,74-75.
[337] Foreign Office 424/7B, Representation of Hussein Pasha, Chief of the Kurdish Tribe of Zeelaun, the Governor General of Erzeroum, May 1843, 123.

3.6 The case of the Celali: The banditization of tribes

During the first half of the nineteenth century almost every European traveler, missionary, and merchant that used the Trabzon-Tabriz trade road noted its insecurity because of banditry by the nomadic tribes of the region and the negligence or unwillingness of local ruling Kurdish families to maintain security and order.[338] The three-month detainment in Bayezid in 1804 of a French official sent on a mission to Persia by Napoleon, M. Jaubert, would be recalled by many travelers in later decades. The anecdote was repeated in many European accounts of an indication of the insecurity of the region and lawlessness of its inhabitants.[339] European travelers passing through the region also emphasized the necessity of taking precautions for safe travel.[340]

These European travel accounts describe that the peasant villages of Northwestern Iran and the Northeastern Ottoman Empire – as well as merchants and travelers along the Trabzon-Tabriz trade route – were subject to attack by the local tribes. In these accounts, local authorities were presented as incapable of or unwilling to recover the plundered items, prosecute the culprits, and provide general security. Both European and Ottoman accounts explained the banditry and violence as almost integral to the social norms and cultural codes of tribal groups – a "natural" aspect of their lifestyle and a primal "custom" that had continued since antiquity.[341]

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[338] Johnson, *A Journey from India to England through Persia, Georgia, Russia, Poland and Prussia, in the year 1817*. Perkins, *Residence of Eight Years in Persia among the Nestorian Christians*, 111-129. Stuart, *Journal of a Residence in Northern Persia and the Adjacent Provinces of Turkey*, 101-121.

[339] Smith and Dwight, *Missionary Researches in Armenia* 416. James Brant, "Notes of a Journey Through a Part of Kurdistan, in the Summer of 1838," 422.

[340] Smith and Dwight, *Missionary Researches in Armenia* 413-424. Abbott, "Notes of a Tour in Armenia in 1837."

[341] For instance, Johnson through referring the retreat of Xenophon and Ten Thousands dates back the banditry of the region to the ancient times. Johnson, *A Journey from India to England through Persia, Georgia, Russia, Poland and Prussia, in the year 1817*, 232. Robert Curzon also makes similar statements. See Curzon, *Armenia: a year at Erzeroom, and on the Frontiers of Russia, Turkey and Persia* 179.

Brigandage and violence were also explained with a dichotomous discourse of the civilized and uncivilized worlds. Kurds, as rulers of an "unknown and uncivilized world," were regarded as responsible for every kind of evil.[342] Not only cultural codes but also the geography fostered violence and banditry according to European travelers. Located on a distant, inaccessible frontier with a mountainous terrain, the region was predisposed to violence and banditry. Most travel accounts, after describing the beauty of the pasture grounds and the romance of the roving Kurdish tribes and their black tents and flocks, noted the inaccessible nature of the terrain. According to these accounts, the mountains – in spite of their beauty – hid those who returned from raids and pillage, making it impossible for government forces to pursue the culprits.[343] Such descriptions, however, were not unique to the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire but applied to other parts of the Ottoman East, as well.[344]

Like the European accounts of the time, the contemporaneous official Ottoman discourse interpreted the banditry and general insecurity in the region as an outcome of the nomadic – but primarily the tribal – lifestyle of the inhabitants. This perception was not an invention of the mid-nineteenth century but had a long history rooted in the essential distinction between settled and nomadic lifestyles and the cultural and political codes to which they were subject. The terms *ekrâd*, *aşâir*, *ekrâd ve aşâir makulesi,* and *ekrâd taifesi* in official Ottoman correspondence in the entire nineteenth century not only denoted the nomadic, tribal lifestyle but were widely used as pejorative stereotypes that implied the cultural and social primitiveness of the

[342] Fraser, *A Winter's Journey From Constantinople to Tehran with Travels Through Various Parts of Persia* 1, 256-257. Fowler, *Three years in Persia, with travelling adventures in Koordistan*, 1, 18.
[343] Fowler, *Three years in Persia, with travelling adventures in Koordistan*, 1, 292.
[344] Metin Atmaca in his article shows how similar descriptions were in use among European travelers who visited different parts of Ottoman Kurdistan. See Atmaca, "'Fermanü's-Sultan boş beyne'l-Ekrad": Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Doğusunda Şakiler."

tribes.[345] Banditry, generally was perceived as integral to the rooted customs (*adat*) and nature (*cibilliyet*) of the Kurdish tribes.

In 1813, the newly-appointed governor of Erzurum, Ahmed Pasha, mentioned that the order (*şirâze-i nizam*) of the province broke down because of the seasonal atrocities of the nomadic tribes during their migrations between the Ottoman and Persian Empires.[346] He stated that the tribes engaged in various crimes ranging from raids, plunder, and theft vis-à-vis the peasantry and hijacking of travelers and merchants. In his reports, Ahmed Pasha defined these tribes as ill-tempered Kurds (*ekrad-ı bed nihad*) and a heretic sect (*firka-i dalle*) who grasp the meaning of neither state nor religion (*din ve devleti bilmez bir taife*).[347] Especially, during political upheavals, wars, and local revolts, frontier tribes were represented as no more than bandits (*eşkiyâ*) and insects (*haşerât*) whose readiness to raid and pillage settled populations was inherent.[348] In the minds of both civil and military Ottoman officials, the tribal lifestyle stood in opposition to urban and state order. Opposition to the imposition of directives to establish stability and security was something natural to the tribes. Similarly, inter-tribal conflicts and reciprocal plunder of one-another's livestock were conceived as part of ancient customs (*mutad-ı kadime*) of

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[345] Richard Tapper argues that in Iran "terms such as "Kurd," "Lur," "Arab," "Shahsevan," and "Baluch" are used synonymously with "tent dwelling pastoral nomad", yet these names are also used, in other contexts, of and by tribal groups whose members are by no means all nomads or even pastoralists." See Tapper, "The Tribes in Eighteenth Century and Nineteenth Century Iran," 507. In Ottoman Empire, the term "ekrad" other than its pejorative usage, had been used to refer two different situations. Its first usage was to refer to an ethnic identity, Kurds. Second it is used to refer to a social, political and economic class; nomadic tribes.

[346] BOA, HAT 804/37129 D.

[347] BOA, HAT 804/37129, BOA, HAT, 804/37129 F, BOA, HAT 804/37129 D "*Ekrad ve aşair makulesi ise firka-i dalle nevi'nden hakkı bilmez ve din ve devleti fehm etmez makuleden olduklarından*"

[348] BOA, HAT 461/22617 B, 25 ZA 1249 (April 5, 1834) "*Cibrânlı aşireti sergerdesi Mehmed Halil nâm şaki bû günlerde bin kadar süvâri ve piyâde haşeratla*"

which tribal groups were proud.[349]

In bureaucratic correspondence in the nineteenth century, the eastern regions of the empire were defined mostly as tribal (*mahal-i aşâir ve kabâil, aşâir yatağı, cevânib-i erbası aşâir ve kabâil),*[350] mountainous, inaccessible (*sengistan ve kuhistan mahal, suubü'l mürur mahal*), and as a frontier (*intihâ-yı hudud, intihâ-yı serhad-ı hakani, intihâ-yı hudud-ı islamiye*).[351] It was assumed to be a different cultural and political setting from the urban spheres and core regions of the empire, which were inhabited by peaceful, obedient Ottoman subjects. From the perspective of Ottoman officials, the customs and lifestyles of the tribes and Kurds who occupied this landscape were entirely different and had always been a burden on the peasantry as well as an obstacle to the formation of effective government, taxation, and conscription.[352] Despite the existence of such a discourse in earlier decades, the official discourse adopted by Ottoman authorities regarding the security and welfare of the imperial domain – and regarding those who threatened them – became much more formalized and standardized, as Maurus Reinkowski shows.[353] The pre-conceived images about the tribes were not only confined to official discourse. Urban population also assumed tribal groups mostly as a threat to order and security,

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[349] BOA, HAT 790/36804 A, 21 L 1230 (September 26, 1815) "*Öteden berü devlet-i aliyye hududunda olan ekrad ve aşâir ve İranlıu toprağında olan aşâir ile hemcins ve hemcivar olmak takribi birbirlerinin mal ve hayvanat ve tavarlarını sarike ve gasb etmek mutad-ı kadimeleri ve kendülerine iftihar add ediyorlar*" BOA, HAT 814/37264 J, 8 Z 1240 (July 24, 1825) "*Kadimü'l zamandan berü aşâir ve ekrad kulları birbirlerini gasb ve garet etmiş ve emvali magsubeleri cem ve istirdad olunamamış"*

[350] BOA, A.MKT 70/99, 1263.3.25 (March 13, 1847), "*Mutki Kazası sengistan mahal ve ahâlisi aşâir ve kabail ve kendüleri birçok tüfenkli bulunması cihetiyle mahallerine istinaden min el kadim layıkıyla hükümet cari olamamış*" BOA, I.MMS 29/1238, "*Ol havali ise ekrâd ve aşâir yatağı olduğundan"*

[351] *BOA, HAT 1/18A, (1819), "Kars ve Erzurum intiha-yı serhad-ı hakaniden olub bir tarafı Moskoflu ile hemcivar ve bir tarafı İran huddu olan Revan sinoru olub*" BOA 1/18B, (1819), "*Kars eyaleti intiha-yı hudud-ı islamiye olub*"

[352] BOA, HAT 804/37129, 1229 B 12 (June 30,1814) "*Aşâir-i mezkur mukteza-yı cibiliyet-i reddiyeleri üzere birer bahane ile oldukları kazanın mecmuu mal ve eşya ve hayvanatını garet ve tarc ederek İran tarafına ve İranda başı sıkılana beru tarafa ubur ile*" BOA, I.MVL 224/7619 "*ahalisi ekser aşâirden ibaret olarak bir mahalde istikrâr etmedikleri cihhetle vergüleri şimdiye kadar yoluna girememiş"*

[353] Reinkowski, "The State's Security and the Subjects' Properity."

who were always ready to exploit and oppress the peasantry.[354]

Ottoman authorities made a clear distinction between spaces, where state power prevailed, and tribal spaces, where state authority was weak. They emphasized the contrasting politics, culture, and economy of these two different zones. However, as Richard Tapper argues, such descriptions did not denote the objective conditions but the cultural perceptions of particular places at a particular time.[355] Thomas J. Barfield also underscores that these oppositional categories never actually produced a linear frontier since "all tribal peoples in the Middle East traditionally maintained close economic and cultural ties with their urban neighbors."[356] Likewise Samira Haj, in her study of the tribes of lower Ottoman Iraq, criticizes orientalist approaches that treat tribes as distinct socio-economic units apart from and in opposition to settled populations. She focuses instead on their diverse economic activities and powerful relations with cultivators and the urban population.[357] Haj further argues that the relationship between the tribes and states was not always oppositional. And even conflicts with the state were not caused by inherent tribal hostility but by specific historical conditions.[358]

In the light of these discussions, banditry and different forms of violence should be contextualized instead of explaining them through ahistorical tribal customs or treating them as peculiarities of tribal geographies. Indeed, nomadic tribal populations of the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire were neither isolated from nor always in conflict with so-called urban and governmental spheres. Despite

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[354] For the examples of how the residents of imperial capital perceived tribes as a problem of security in distant provinces of the Ottoman Empire during the early Tanzimat years, see Kırlı, *Sultan ve Kamuoyu Osmanlı Modernleşme Sürecinde "Havadis Jurnalleri" (1840-1844)*, 311, 343, 378, 388, 439.
[355] Tapper, "Anthropologists, Historians, and Tribespeople," 66.
[356] Barfield, "Tribe and State Relations: The Inner Asian Perspective," 160.
[357] Haj, "The Problems of Tribalism," 58.
[358] Haj, "The Problems of Tribalism," 57-58.

being defined as denizens of a tribal landscape, the tribes of the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire established close relationships with non-tribal peasants and administrative circles. By appealing for historical contextualization, this dissertation does not underestimate the role of tribal customs in inter-tribal conflicts and the conflicts between nomadic tribes and sedentary cultivators. But explaining raids, violence, and atrocities with tribal customs precludes a deeper understanding of the politics and economy of the frontier. As discussed in the following pages, each case of violence and banditry and each large-scale raid should be contextualized and treated as the product of certain historical economic and political conditions.

As indicated by the cases of the Haydaran and Sepki, banditry was a crucial aspect of inter-tribal, inter-dynastic, and inter-imperial struggle in the early nineteenth century. The rivalry and struggle among the local Kurdish dynasties on the eastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire or with those on the Persian side of the border were manifest mostly in the form of large scale livestock raids. Since these local rulers were ostensibly "state agents," the line dividing "state violence" and "individual violence" was blurred to a great extent early in the century. In a frontier landscape where there was no exclusive monopoly over violence, the term banditry (*şekâvet*) was used by a variety of power holders (both central and provincial) to refer to a variety of violent acts of which they disapproved.

In the early nineteenth century, tribal banditry was part of a larger network of violence, part of inter-dynastic or inter-tribal conflicts and rivalries, or even an alternative economy. Plundering rival settlements and tribal livestock was not only a fiscal resource for both tribes and local dynasties but also a form of punishing a rival tribe or entity. This form of violence was not peculiar to the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire but present in other parts as well. Tolga Esmer demonstrates

that during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Kara Feyzi created an alternative banditry economy in the Balkans from which various segments of society, including peasants and Ottoman officials at the highest levels, tried to benefit.[359] Pillage and raids became a widespread economic aspect of the warfare among the khanate of Revan, the yurtluk-ocaklık governors of Bayezid, and the guardians of Kars and Van. Nomadic tribes, under the protection of a frontier ruler, pillaged and raided the villages of rival political entities, empires, dynasties, and tribes. In a region characterized by warring local dynasties in which imperial capitals had limited or no authority, raiding and pillaging became an important feature of the conflicts between local hereditary dynasties of Ottoman Empire and frontier authorities of the Persian Empire.

During these conflicts, nomads lost a great number from among their livestock, especially sheep and cattle. In 1818, during the conflict between Ottomans and Iranians, the Sepki lost nearly 125 thousand head of livestock because of an assault carried out by Iranian authorities.[360] In 1823, the Haydaran lost 7000 sheep, 2000 head of cattle, and 400 draft horses when they were attacked by their rival, the Sepki.[361] The numbers were always in the thousands, and such large-scale plundering was not exceptional in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The well-being of the nomads clearly depended on the quantity of their livestock, as sheep were an important commodity in local economy. Yet there is little information regarding the distribution of livestock per tent before and after large scale plundering, which damaged both the upper and lower segments of tribal groups. In 1804, when Mahmud Pasha, the yurtluk-ocaklık mutasarrıf of Bayezid, attacked the Haydaran

[359] Esmer, "A Culture of Rebellion," 195-258.
[360] BOA, HAT 771/36186, (1820).
[361] BOA, HAT 814/37264 D, (1824).

tribe, the number of sheep plundered from tribal elites (*torun*) amounted to 365,500, while from lower segments of tribe it amounted to 112,675.[362] Tapper argues that

> Pastoralism is an unstable economy compared with settled cultivation. A farmer's main asset, land, fails because of bad weather, disease or depredation, but remains unharmed to produce again next year. Pastoralists, on the other hand, have in their animals an asset which not only is highly susceptible for starvation, disease, exposure and theft, and can thereby be virtually annihilated in a few days or even hours, but unlike farmland (or pasture) cannot automatically recover next season. A flock of sheep can be reconstituted only after years of hard and careful husbandry.[363]

The northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire experienced three major wars fought among the Russians, Ottomans, and Persians between 1820 and 1830. All of these turned the pastures of the tribes into battlefields and resulted in shifting boundaries, mass migration, the increasing presence of imperial states in tribal landscapes, and an almost complete disruption of the pastoral habitat. As the region turned into a site of struggle among the competing empires, it was no longer a favorable environment for pastoral production. In this context, banditry was not only an alternative economy but also response to the increasing control of the surrounding empires. It was not peculiar to Kurdish pastoral nomads of the region. Tapper points out that Shahsevan nomads of the Mughan Steppes increasingly engaged in banditry when they were cut off from their traditional winter quarters and summer pastures because of increasing control by the Russian and Persian Empires in the nineteenth century. According to him, following the closure of the Russian-Persian border in the Mughan steppes, nomads were cut off from their pasturing grounds and water, disrupting their pastoral production and leading to their banditization.[364]

As discussed in the previous part, the Russian conquest of the khanate of

[362] BOA, C.DH 24/1196, 1218 L17 (January 30, 1804).
[363] Tapper, "The Tribes in Eighteenth Century and Nineteenth Century Iran," 528.
[364] Tapper, "Nomads and Comissars in the Mughan Steppe."

Revan following the Russo-Persian War of 1826-1828 resulted in the loss of significant pasturing grounds and winter settlements on the Persian side of the border. Given the shortage of available pastureland on the Persian side, many tribal nomads of the region including several segments of the Celali turned to the Ottoman side of the border. In the 1830s, the Celali tribe was a loosely-integrated tribal confederation. Unlike the Zilan and Haydaran mentioned in the previous part, during this period, no prestigious chief effectively controlled or coordinated all the subdivisions of the Celali nomads. Despite not being an integral part of the Zilan Confederation, the chief of Zilan, Hüseyin Agha, had some moral and political authority over some of the Celalis. The Celali tribe traditionally used the pasturing grounds of all three intersecting empires during the summers and wintered in the villages of Ottoman Bayezid, Russian Revan, and Persian Maku. However, in the early 1830s, many sections of the Celalis migrated to the district of Ottoman Bayezid because of disputes with Persian authorities over taxes and their insistence on using Ottoman pasturing grounds.

In spring 1834, however, the Persian governor of Khoy, Cihangir Mirza, crossed into Ottoman territory with his army and pursued a punitive expedition against the Celalis. The Persian army plundered their livestock, killed some members of the tribe, and plundered a few villages of Bayezid along their way.[365] The Celali had not expected this punishment since they believed a military expedition in Ottoman territory would at least require the consent of the Ottoman Empire, which would give them enough time to avoid direct confrontation with Persian armies. In summer 1834, the Celalis responded to Persian authorities even more violently. A large Persian trade caravan en route from Ottoman Istanbul to Persian Tabriz was

[365] BOA, HAT 01315/51270 A, 21 C 250 (October 25, 1834).

attacked by a group from the Celali tribe near the Ottoman village of Karakilise. The Celali not only seized the vast goods and commodities of the caravan but killed several Persian merchants. The value of the pillaged commodities was later estimated to be 7227 purses akçe and 85 piaster.[366] Although the Celalis' engagement in banditry against trade caravans between Erzurum and Tabriz was not new, the extent of the pillage immediately attracted the attention of Persian and Ottoman authorities as well as British agents who were deeply interested in the security of the road connecting Persia and Europe.

Plunder of a Persian trade caravan by the tribe of Celali within Ottoman territory once again heated up tensions between the Ottoman and Qajar Empires. The presence of a "Persian tribe" in Ottoman territory clearly violated the Erzurum Treaty of 1823. Ottoman authorities, especially the governor of Erzurum, Esad Pasha, put the responsibility for the plunder on the shoulders of Behlül Pasha, the mutasarrıf of the Bayezid district. He claimed that such atrocities occurred because of the pashas' indolence and impotence, and he demanded the imperial capital immediately dismiss him.[367] Persian authorities not only demanded the recovery of the plundered goods but also the extradition of the offenders. Yet capturing and punishing a mobile group living at the intersection of three adjoining empires would prove extremely difficult.[368]

Early negotiations regarding the recovery of the seized goods and commodities of Persian merchants were carried out between Agha Hasan, a Persian envoy who also engaged in trade in the Ottoman Empire, and Esad Pasha, the

[366] BOA, HAT 01315/51270 A, 21 C 250 (October 25, 1834). James Brant stated in1847 that, in Erzurum 1 kese (purse) was equal to 500 piasters (kuruş). Foreign Office, 78/703. Thus, the amount of all plundered commodities by the Celali tribe was equal to 3.613.585 piasters (around 36 thousand pounds sterling) according to the local market values.
[367] BOA, HAT 01315/51270 A, 21 C 250 (October 25, 1834).
[368] BOA, HAT 01315/51270 A, 21 C 250 (October 25, 1834).

governor of Erzurum. During the meetings held in Erzurum, Agha Hasan sought the easiest way of extracting the cost of the commodities from the Celali. He drew attention to their mobility and undesirable outcomes of military force. A military expedition against the tribe of Celali would lead to their emigration to the Russian side of the border. Neither the Ottomans nor the Persians were willing to sacrifice such manpower to the Russian Empire at a time when Russian progress in the Lesser Caucasus was a great threat to both the Ottomans and the Persians. Moreover, a military expedition would not recover the seized commodities of the merchants since they would remain in the hands of the soldiers. Instead of a military expedition, Agha Hasan proposed entreating Huseyin Agha, the chief of the Zilan tribe, to recover the plundered commodities and goods. Thus, the chief of the Zilan became the third party to the negotiations.[369]

Indeed, Huseyin Agha of the Zilan, due to conflicts with Persian authorities, had migrated into Ottoman territory in 1833 and was unwilling to migrate back to the Persian side.[370] Both Ottoman and Persian officials even suspected that Huseyin Agha had a role in this large plunder, which was not unlikely.[371] In the previous section, it is discussed that the Ottomans confiscated his timar villages located in the district of Kars in 1826 and that the tribe lost its pasturing grounds and winter quarters in Revan following the Russian conquest of region in 1827. In 1830, when Ottoman authorities rejected the request of the Zilan to become Ottoman subjects and settle in a suitable district in the Ottoman Empire, they were compelled to migrate to

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[369] BOA, HAT 01315/51270 A, 21 C 250 (October 25, 1834).
[370] BOA, HAT 01315/51270 A, 21 C 250 (October 25, 1834) "*Zilan Ağası aşreti halkıyla Kars toprağından kalkub Celali aşiretiyle birleşerek devlet-i aliyye toprağıyla Rusya Devleti memalikinden Revan toprağı beyninde nasb-ı hayyam ve Rusyalu'ya dehâlet suretini iltizâm ve Iran tarafına gitmemek üzere cümlesi talak-ı yemin eylediklerini beyan ve efha ederek ısrar olunduğu halde cümlesi mal ve canıyla izmihlali kabul edüb İranı kabul etmeyeceklerini sub-ı çakeriye maruzat ve adamlar irsaliyle istirham etmişler*"
[371] BOA, HAT 01315/51270 A, 21 C 250 (October 25, 1834).

Persian Khoy.

Huseyin Agha of the Zilan agreed to be a mediator in the recovery of the commodities and goods plundered by Celali. In return, he demanded that he be allowed to stay in Ottoman territory permanently. Agha Hasan, the Persian envoy, was open to this suggestion but stated that such the permission be limited to a period of one to fifty years provided that the cost of the plunder be extracted from Persian tribes who were wandering in Ottoman territory. Both sides agreed on these articles, and negotiations were finalized with a mutually-drafted contract in Erzurum. A copy was sent to Amir Nizam Khan, the general commander of the Persian army in Tabriz, for ratification. At first Amir Nizam demanded that the permission to be given to the Zilan tribe to be limited to from one to five years. Yet, he later rejected the agreement completely claiming that Agha Hasan had no authority to carry out such negotiations on behalf of the Persian Empire.[372]

Soon afterward, Amir Nizam, with 5000 Persian soldiers, arrived at Kazlı Göl, a disputed piece of land along the Ottoman-Persian border. The governor of Erzurum, Esad Pasha, also entered Bayezid with an Ottoman force. From their camps, the two sides engaged in a long conversation regarding the recovery of plundered commodities from the tribe of Celali. The conversation lasted over a month in which they reached no agreement. Esad Pasha even suggested the intervention of Russian or British envoys when negotiations came to a deadlock.

Following several meetings and much correspondence, the two sides finally reached an agreement: the Persian tribes including the Zilan, Cemaldini, Celali, Sepki, and Haydaran, who had migrated into Ottoman territory would stay there as guests (*misafiret tarikiyle*) for one-year and be under the charge of Ottoman

[372] BOA, HAT 01315/51270 A, 21 C 250 (October 25, 1834).

authorities.[373] Both sides agreed to work in coordination to determine the border dividing the Ottoman and Persian Empires as well as to form a joint commission to resolve outstanding border issues.[374] The seized goods and commodities of the Persian merchants, valued at 7227 purse 85 akçe, would be returned within three months, and a commission would be formed to assess the damage done to the villages of Bayezid by Cihangir Mirza during his punitive expedition against the Celalis.[375] A later source indicates that the duration was extended to six months and that Huseyin Agha of the Zilan was charged with recovering the commodities from the tribes as he was respected among the nomads of the region.[376] In another meeting, Ottoman and Persian authorities further decided that the provisions (600 kese akçe) for the armies during the meetings to resolve the dispute between the two empires be recovered from those tribes that would stay as guests of the Ottoman Empire.[377]

It soon became clear that the recovery of the plundered commodities from the tribes would be a tough process. First, nomads were not concentrated in a single region (*toptan bir mahalde bulunmadığı*) and moved fluidly across the borders of three intersecting empires, which prevented easy access to them.[378] It was also reported that Huseyin Agha of the Zilan, who was charged with recovering the goods, intentionally delayed the repayment.[379] He possibly hoped to increase the duration of his stay in Ottoman territory by extending the recovery process.

Soon after, a military expedition was carried out against the Zilan and Celali

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[373] BOA, HAT 1315/51270 B, (1834).
[374] BOA, HAT 1315/51270 B, (1834).
[375] BOA, HAT 1315/51270 B, (1834).
[376] BOA, HAT 329/19075 F, 250 (1834).
[377] BOA, HAT 1315/51270 D, 1250 (1835).
[378] BOA, HAT 329/19075 F, 250 (1834).
[379] BOA, HAT 329/19075 F, 250 (1834) "*Merkûm Hüseyin Ağa cibiliyet-ı reddiyesine merkuz olan fesad ve telvinkarı icrâ*"

who were camping close to the border. While Huseyin Agha of the Zilan was captured, some of the Celalis managed to cross to the Russian side of the border. As the amount to be collected from them was significant, the tribes of the region found themselves in a difficult position. In 1835, British Colonel Charles Stuart, who was on a mission to Persia, passed through the Ottoman district of Bayezid and noted the presence of large numbers of Zilan and Celali tents on both sides of the Murat River. He noted that the Celalis were rebelling against the pasha of Kars who had attempted to collect 4000 instead of 400 purses from them, the latter of which was their share.[380] Meanwhile, Ottoman and Persian authorities in Erzurum decided, in a new contract, mutually to decrease the amount to be paid to 5,128 kese akçe. The difficulty of recovering the plundered items and high inflation in the market in Erzurum influenced this decision.[381] While Ottoman authorities managed to retrieve a large amount, 1,700 kese akçe remained unpaid. The contract also stated that in the case that tribes migrated to Persia or Russia, Persian authorities would recover their share from those tribes.[382]

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In between 1830 and 1840, the Ottoman authorities were clearly frustrated by the border-violating migrations of the nomads, their engagement in banditry in Ottoman territories, and the process of recovering plundered goods and commodities. The attack by the Celalis of the Persian trade caravan was not the only such raid in which nomads of the region had engaged during the 1830s. A document dated 1836 demonstrates the extent to which nomadic tribes of the region perpetuated banditry against merchants, peasants, and other tribes. Between 1832-1836, Esad Pasha, the

[380] Stuart, *Journal of a Residence in Northern Persia and the Adjacent Provinces of Turkey*, 116.
[381] BOA, HAT 1315/51269, 1250 (1835).
[382] BOA, HAT 1315/51269 B, 1250, (1835).

governor of Erzurum, recovered nearly 9400 kese akçe from the nomads of the Celali, Haydaran, Hasananlı, Zilan, Cemaldini, Cünükan, and Sepki as compensation for various acts of banditry along the Ottoman-Persian frontier.[383]

During the late 1830s, the recovery of plundered items from the Celali, Haydaran, Sepki, Zilan, and several other local tribes occupied an important place in the diplomatic relations between the Ottomans and Persians. Importantly, these tribes were officially considered to be Persian subjects despite their mobility across the border. Contracts signed by the two sides in the second half of the century regarding the recovery of plundered goods also included articles about delivering tribesmen to Persian authorities or allowing them to stay in Ottoman territory as guests for limited periods of time (*misafiret tarikiyle*).

Even as Ottoman authorities of Erzurum, Kars, and Bayezid and Persian frontier authorities were dealing with the recovery of items plundered by nomads of the region, new information arrived in the Ottoman imperial capital in 1840 that the tribe of Celali had once again attacked a Persian trade caravan close to the village of Üç Kilise in the district of Bayezid district and stolen a significant quantity of the commodities of the merchants. Moreover, they had raided Persian pilgrims near Dizeh around the same time. Behlül Pasha, the kaimakam of Bayezid, argued in correspondence with the center that the plundering was being carried out by Celali nomads who were protected by the chief of Zilan, Hüseyin Agha.[384] As frontier Ottoman authorities and Ottoman envoys in Persia engaged in correspondence regarding the prevention of banditry by the nomads of the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire and the recovery of plundered commodities, it was reported that

[383] BOA, HAT 806/37169 A and BOA, HAT 806/37169 B.
[384] BOA, İ.MSM 37/1048, (1840).

Kasım Agha of the Haydaran tribe, Huseyin Agha of the Zilan, and the Celalis had since organized a joint raid on the villages of Van with the encouragement of Persian authorities.[385] It was claimed that they had poached almost 5000 head of livestock from twenty-eight villages of Van and Mahmudi.[386]

Russian authorities also complained about the banditry in which the tribe of Celali engaged in the villages of Russia and Georgia.[387] In 1840, the Russian General of the Caucasus complained about banditry by the Celali occupying the Ottoman-Russian-Persian borderland and demanded that Persian authorities take forceful measures against them. Moreover, the Russian authorities demanded the capture – alive or dead – of the chief of the Zilan, Hüseyin Agha, who was regarded as the perpetuator of all the plundering taking place throughout the frontiers of the three empires.[388]

In 1841, under pressure by Russian authorities, Ottoman and Persian authorities finally decided to act in concert with the Russians to prevent the migration of the Celalis across the borders to end their banditry.[389] In the case of cross border migrations, they were to be returned to Persian authorities. Consul Brant reports that "following the suggestions of the governor general of Georgia, the Amir Nizam went with the troops to the Persian frontier, Russian troops marched to their own, and the soldiers of the Ottoman Empire were stationed at Bayezid. The aim was clearly to punish the Celalis for their raiding and to force them to migrate to the

[385] BOA, İ.MSM 37/1048, 27 C 1256 (August 26, 1840).
[386] BOA, C.HR 171/8507, (1840).
[387] FO 78/401, James Brant to Viscount Palmerston, Erzeroom, October 15, 1840.
[388] FO 78/401, James Brant to Viscount Palmerston, Erzeroom, October 15, 1840.
[389] BOA, C.HR 179/8950, 21 August 1840 "*Gerek devlet-i Rusya ve gerek aliyyenin hududlarından ibad ve bade taife-i merkumenin sergerdesi olub cümlesi harekat-ı na maraziyatının vukuuna sebeb olmakda olan Hüseyin Aga nam sağ ve yahud maktul olarak ahz ve girift ettirmek hususunda elyevm iran şahı ve keyfiyet-i mezkure dahi üç devlete müfid bir madde olduğu*"

interior of Persia."[390] However, the forceful measures taken by these three states did not result in the eradication of banditry. Indeed, the disruption of nomadic pastoralism through coercive methods and the encapsulation of tribes resulted in even more banditry by the nomads of the borderland.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter elucidates how pastoral nomadic tribes along the borders of the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires adapted themselves or responded to political developments in the first half of the nineteenth century. Each case – of the Haydaran, Zilan, and Celali tribes – focuses on different aspects of state-tribe relations along this military frontier. In the case of Haydaran, I show how a tribal confederation used their mobility as an advantage to avoid taxation and conscription by the state or local rulers. The case of the Zilan indicates how the transformation of Northeastern Anatolia and the Lesser Caucuses into a military frontier of three rival empires influenced a large tribal confederation. The wars among them not only resulted in the loss of the favored pasturing grounds and winter quarters of the Zilan but also led to the dispersion of Zilan families among the domains of three rival empires. The case of the Celali indicates how the new reality of the Ottoman-Russian-Persian order and the growing pressure of the state pushed tribal groups to banditry. All these cases also illustrate reciprocal relations between the state or local rulers and the nomadic tribes. These tribes provided cavalries and taxes to the local rulers (hereditary dynasties or frontier governors) in return for the right to use summer pasturing grounds and winter settlements.

[390] FO 78/443, James Brant, "Report on the Trade of Erzeroom for 1840 and on the State of Pashalık", Erzeroom, January 21, 1841, See also BOA, C.HR 179/8950, August 21, 1840.

CHAPTER 4

TANZIMAT STATE AND FRONTIER NOMADS

This chapter provides the background for the changing relations between the state and nomadic tribal formations on the northeastern frontier of the Ottoman Empire during the second half of the nineteenth century. It discusses how Ottoman tribal policy along the northeastern frontiers of the empire concerned the replacement of indirect with direct rule as well as with the process of border making between the Ottoman and Persian Empires. It is divided into four main parts. The first provides a general outlook on the Ottoman reform process during the Tanzimat era (1839-1876). The second part draws on a broad literature, discusses how local parameters like geography, demographic composition, degree of commercialization, and tribal structures determined state-tribe relations in Anatolian, Syrian, and Iraqi provinces. The third part directs its attention to the northeastern frontiers of the empire. It explores the peculiarities of the region's administrative and political conditions on the eve of the reform process. Finally, the fourth part discusses the tribal policy of the Ottoman Empire along its northeastern frontiers.

4.1 A general outlook to the Tanzimat reforms

The Tanzimat period (1839-1876) is accepted to be a period of the reorganization and modernization of the Ottoman imperial state structure. In general, the reforms carried out in this era were to establish an efficient and centrally-coordinated system of administration, taxation, conscription and law to enable the Ottoman imperial capital to establish direct relations with subjects living in its realm. In an age of internal challenges, fiscal crises, and growing nationalism, the reforms of the era

sought to expand the authority of the central state throughout the imperial realm, increase the state treasury's share of various revenues, and bring about a notion of equal citizenship to maintain the unified structure of the multi-ethnic and multi-religious empire.[391] The Tanzimat era officially began with the public reading of the Edict of Gülhane in 1839 and lasted until Abdulhamid II assumed the throne in 1876.[392] For the purposes of this dissertation, however, no such strict periodization can be accepted since the implementation of Tanzimat reforms on the frontiers were not synchronous with their implementation in core regions of the empire.

The aim of Tanzimat reformers was to form a rational, modern, and efficient bureaucracy that would operate through division of labor, coordination, and communication among a variety of departments in both the imperial capital and the provinces.[393] The administrative reforms were designed to form a hierarchy among state officials, each responsible to his superior, within a new administrative pyramid. In provinces, this organization gradually broke the political power of local notables (*ayân*) who had hitherto occupied various administrative posts and acted as intermediaries between the imperial capital and various layers of society. In simpler terms, the reforms sought to replace indirect rule with direct rule. While the governors of administrative districts were centrally-appointed, local councils formed at various levels of provincial administration were granted responsibility for certain provincial matters.[394] In the early years of the Tanzimat, such local councils not only limited the power of the provincial governors but also enabled the integration of

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[391] İnalcık, "Tanzimat'ın Uygulanması ve Sosyal Tepkileri," 363-369.
[392] The Ottoman reform movement towards a central and modern empire however, started earlier than the public proclamation of the Tanzimat edict. During the reigns of Selim III (1789-1807) and Mahmud II (1808-1839) a series of reforms were put into practice in the military and administrative structure of the empire. See Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 21-50.
[393] For a detailed account of institutional reforms of the Tanzimat period, see Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876*; Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire,* 140-220.
[394] Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Sürecinde Türkiye Ülke Yönetimi*, 259-285.

local notables into the administrative, fiscal, and judicial structure of the empire. The members of local councils were delegated responsibility for various provincial tasks including the collection of taxes, the governance of the provinces, and the maintenance of public works.[395] A more concrete step in changing the administrative and judicial organization of the empire came with the Provincial Reform Codes of 1864 and 1871 through which imperial domains were divided into administrative units for the purpose of better government and control.[396] Local councils, which were renamed administrative councils (*idâre meclisi*), functioned at the provincial (*vilâyet*), sub-provincial (*livâ*), and district (*kaza*) levels and were responsible for the collection of taxes, military conscription, and the imposition of law in the countryside under the supervision of the governors.[397]

Reforms carried out to the fiscal organization of the state sought to establish a direct fiscal relation to Ottoman subjects by eliminating tax farming – or at least by minimizing the role of tax farmers and local notables in the tax collection process, thereby increasing the imperial capital's share of agricultural surplus.[398] The Tanzimat edict guaranteed individual property rights and a fair taxation system based on individual fortune and wealth. For this purpose, in the early years of the Tanzimat, an income survey (*temettuat*) was carried out in the provinces which were

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[395] Thompson, "Ottoman Political Reform in the Provinces," 457; Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Sürecinde Türkiye Ülke Yönetimi*, 259-285; Akiba, "The Local Councils as the Origin of parliamentary System in the Ottoman Empire," 191.

[396] Jun Akiba argues that following the Provincial Reform Code of 1864, Ottoman authorities avoided forming large provinces. While Macedonia and Albania, were divided into five provinces, the number of provinces in Eastern Anatolia, increased from three to five. See Akiba, "Preliminaries to a Comparative History of the Russian and Ottoman Empires: Perspectives from Ottoman Studies," 38-39.

[397] While early Tanzimat reforms directed to break the authority of the governors, administrative reforms in late 1860s promoted governors as the highest authority in provincial administration of the empire. See Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Sürecinde Türkiye Ülke Yönetimi*, 254-259.

[398] İnalcık, "Tanzimat'ın Uygulanması ve Sosyal Tepkileri," 365.

incorporated into the Tanzimat program[399] and tax collection was carried out by centrally appointed tax collectors known as muhassıl.[400] Owen argues that until the mid-nineteenth century, two distinct groups exercised rights over land and production. The first group was tax farmers who laid claim to agricultural surplus and managed revenue production. The second group was cultivators and peasants who undertook actual agricultural production and cultivated the land for their own subsistence.[401] Nineteenth-century land and fiscal reforms, including the Land Code of 1858, strove to end to the claims of multiple actors over the same land and production on it.[402] The reforms were directed at securing the rights of a single individual to any given property and making each such individual fiscally accessible and responsible to the state.[403] Despite the continuity of tax farming as a method of tax collection, centrally-appointed tax collectors gradually replaced tax farmers during the second half of the nineteenth century.[404]

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[399] Güran, *19. Yüzyıl Temettuat Tahrirleri,* 75-76. For such attempts of the Ottoman Empire in coming decades, see Kaya and Terzibaşoğlu, "Tahrir'den Kadastro'ya 1874 Istanbul Emlak Tahriri ve Vergisi "Kadastro tabir olunur tahrir-i emlak"."; Özbek, "Osmanlı Imparatorluğu'nda Gelir Vergisi: 1903-1907 Tarihli Vergi-i Şahsi Uygulaması."; İslamoğlu, "Property as a Contested Domain: A Reevaluation of the Ottoman Land Code," 24-25. Early fiscal surveys known as *temettuat* was never carried out in the Ottoman East, except in a few sancaks of the province of Erzurum. This is because of the fact that still many parts of the eastern frontier were ruled as yurtluk ocaklık sanjaks and also contained a large number of nomadic population. See Duman Koç, "Governing a Frontier Sancak in the Ottoman Empire," 113-118.
[400] Bayraktar, "Maliyenin Maliyeti: Tırhala'da Muhassıllık Düzeni."
[401] Owen, "Introduction," XI.
[402] İslamoğlu, "Property as a Contested Domain: A Reevaluation of the Ottoman Land Code," 36; Mundy, "Village authority and the Legal Order of Property," 63-64. The Land Code of 1858 brought different outcomes for different imperial domains. Albertine Jwaideh argues that the application of the Land Code of 1858 in tribal spaces of Lower Iraq resulted in entirely two different and incompatible forms and systems of proprietorship which were often to be found on the same lands. See Jwaideh, "Aspects of Land Tenure and Social Change in Lower Iraq." Haim Gerber, however argues that "the consequences of the 1858 Land Law suggested by the traditional literature were especially applicable to Syria, since large land holdings were widespread in the regions like Hama, Humus, Damascus, and Hawran. Powerful families like Azmzâdes of the Damascus benefited from the Land Code and managed to register large tracts of lands in their own names in different parts of Syria. See Gerber, *The Social Origins of the Modern Middle East*, 68-79.
[403] Terzibaşoğlu, "Eleni Hatun'un Zeytin Bahçeleri," 122.
[404] Özbek, *İmparatorluğun Bedeli*, 29.

The army was also reorganized in a hierarchical structure. The power that provincial governors and other local power holders formerly exercised over army divisions was cut, which signaled the monopolization of physical violence in the hands of the imperial capital.[405] Charles Tilly argues that in most European states, the shift from indirect to direct rule was achieved by two means: extending officialdom to the local community and establishing a police force that answer to the central government rather than individual patrons.[406] In 1843, the Ottoman army was comprised of five divisions (two situated in Istanbul and the others in Anatolia, Arabia, and Rumelia, respectively) under the command of a *serâsker* (commander in chief).[407] Such a centrally-coordinated army severed the military power of provincial governors and limited their authority in provinces. For example, before the reform of the empire's military organization, governors of Erzurum also assumed the title of commander in chief of the Eastern Armies (*Şark Seraskeri*) and led wars against the Russian and Qajar Empires. Following the reform to the military organization of the empire, however, the responsibilities were limited to administrative matters.[408] Another important change to the army was a new conscription system. In 1848, conscription began to be carried out through the drawing of lots and it became compulsory to all male subjects.[409]

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[405] Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Sürecinde Türkiye Ülke Yönetimi*, 225.
[406] Tilly, "War Making and State Making as an Organized Crime," 181.
[407] Çadırcı, "Yenileşme Sürecinde Osmanlı Ordusu," 806-807.
[408] Curbing the power of the governors on army divisions turned into a dispute between provincial governors and the imperial capital. Following the reforms in military organization of the imperial state, Kamili Pasha, the governor of Erzurum, demanded to use the title of Şark Seraskeri as previously. He legitimized his demand through referring to the tribal and frontier peculiarities of the province. See BOA, I.DH 91/4565, 29 Receb 260, (August 14, 1844) *"Erzurum havalisi intiha-yı sinor-u devlet-i aliyyede vaki' aşâir ve kabâil yatağı yerlerden olmak ve Rusya ve İran devlet-i behiyyeleri memalikine hemcivar bulunmak mülasebesiyle sinin-i vafireden berü vülat-ı azam hazeratı şark seraskerliği ünvanı ihsan ve ve aşâir ve saireden edebsiz makulelerinin terhiblerine medar olmak"*
[409] Zurcher, "The Ottoman Conscription System, 1844-1914," 440. For the difficulties in forming a multi-ethnic and multi-religious army, see Hacısalihoğlu, "Inclusion and Exclusion: Conscription in the Ottoman Empire."

The movement towards a more central administration, taxation, and conscription system led to widespread changes to the social, political, and fiscal organization of the Ottoman state and society. However, the reforms, especially in their early stages, created social discontent in many provinces of the empire. The application of the new tax regime resulted in tax revolts in both Anatolia and the Balkans.[410] Tax farming, as an indirect method of tax collection, remained in place in various parts of the empire and continued to be a burden on the peasantry.[411] The conscription of men, especially in frontier provinces, was mostly forced rather than carried out through lots.[412] Irregular forces under the command of local notables continued to comprise an important part of the Ottoman army. Local notables (*ayân*) found new channels by which to maintain their former power and authority in the countryside. Many became part of the local councils and the administrative structure of the provinces and benefited from these new positions in the imperial structure.[413]

The movement towards a more central, modern empire was neither a unidirectional process of reform nor was it confined to the sphere of the state. Regional differences and local interactions shaped the nature of the reform process and created different trajectories of social, economic, and political change. Regional and comparative studies indicate that the state remained neither the sole agent nor the only sphere of change, and local parameters including geography, the social and political organization of society, the commercialization of agriculture, and local

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[410] İnalcık, "Tanzimat'ın Uygulanması ve Sosyal Tepkileri," 369-383; Uzun, *Tanzimat ve Sosyal Direnişler*, 15-59.
[411] Nadir Özbek states that tax farming remained in act until the demise of the empire, yet Ottoman imperial capital rearranged it throughout the nineteenth century in order to break the monopoly of the powerful moneylenders and tax farmers. See Özbek, *İmparatorluğun Bedeli*, 29.
[412] BOA, MV 33/11 "*Muş Redif taburu dairesinde bulunan Mutki Kazasının üç yüz iki senesi kura-i şeriyyesi içun icâb eden davete esnan erbabı tarafından icabet olunmamakla beraber mahalli vücuh ve ayanın dahi meclise gelmedikleri"*
[413] İnalcık, "Tanzimat'ın Uygulanması ve Sosyal Tepkileri," 371-372.

power networks shaped the nature and progress of the reforms.[414] Given a multi-ethnic, multi-religious empire with great regional variation, more than one path to modernization was inevitable. Especially in frontier districts, every reform attempt was a field of negotiation between the imperial capital and various segments of the frontier societies. In many cases, reforms were redefined, localized, and selectively implemented. As seen in this and coming chapters, in the case of tribal nomads, the taxes to be paid, the number of tribesmen to be enlisted into the imperial army, the administrative position of the tribes, and the law to which they would be responsible turned into bargaining chips for tribes and various circles of the Ottoman bureaucracy.

4.2 Tanzimat state and nomadic tribes

The formation of direct administration, taxation, and military conscription first required knowledge of the society. Yet on the eve of the reforms, the imperial center's knowledge about frontier societies was largely based on information provided by local notables rather than censuses or surveys. James C. Scott argues that in the attempt of modern states to make society legible, they arrange and record the population in ways to expediently perform the functions of taxation and conscription and to prevent rebellion.[415] He argues that the "pre-modern state was, in many crucial respects, partially blind; it knew precious little about its subjects, their wealth, their landholdings and yields, their location, their very identity. It lacked anything like a detailed 'map' of its terrain and its people."[416] However, modern

[414] For a critique of statist approaches on the nineteenth century Ottoman modernization process, see Köksal, "Imperial Center and Local Groups."; Blumi, *Rethinking the Late Ottoman Empire*; Petrov, "Everyday Forms of Compliance."; Toksöz, "Reform ve Yönetim: Devletten Topluma."
[415] Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 2.
[416] Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 2.

states, through the "creation of permanent last names, the standardization of weights and measures, the establishment of cadastral surveys and population registers, the invention of freehold tenure, the standardization of language and legal discourse, the design of cities, and the organization of transportation," endeavor to make society legible and simple to rule.[417] Scott calls this process "transformative state simplification." Despite hiding the complexity of state-society relations by cutting a clear boundary between them, Scott's conceptualization nevertheless provides important insight into the visions of state officials of modernizing, centralizing states.

The politics of population began to occupy an important space in the minds of the Ottoman bureaucrats of the Tanzimat era. Selçuk Dursun argues that population was regarded as an important source of economic wealth for imperial treasury, a labor force for agricultural production and projects and a human source for the imperial army.[418] Thus, its protection, improvement, procreation became one of the demographic policies of the empire.[419] In the view of modernizing powers of the nineteenth century, the nomadic tribal lifestyle directly challenged modern state formation. Mobility afforded nomads illegibility, and illegibility made it difficult for imperial authorities to control, tax, and conscript the nomads. Mobility was also considered a threat to imperial sovereignty and the territoriality of modernizing empires. Nomads, despite being treated an obstacle before attempts to centralize and modernize, were nevertheless important sources of revenue and manpower in the policies of the imperial states. The legibility, accessibility, and governability of the nomads, however, required their sedentarization. In the Ottoman case, starting in the

[417] Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 2.
[418] Dursun, "Procreation, Family and 'Progress'," 161.
[419] Dursun, "Procreation, Family and 'Progress'," 161.

1840s, the sedentarization of nomads turned into a major item of policy in the Ottoman imperial capital as well as in the administrations of various provinces.

During the nineteenth century, nomadic tribal formations compromised a great proportion of the population of large imperial powers. Central Asian and southern steppes of the Russian Empire; Arabian, Kurdish, and Anatolian provinces of the Ottoman Empire; and the northern plains of the United States were home to numerous nomadic tribes. Despite differing methods of control, conquest, and integration, the modernizing powers of the nineteenth century shared a common perception of the tribes inhabiting the lands that they claimed. The nomadic tribal lifestyle, from the perspective of such modernizing empires, was not compatible with a modern one. Imperial officials made an essential distinction between the lifestyles of nomads and those of settlers as well as between tribal and non-tribal social formations. In this perception, nomadic tribes were often described as wild, uncivil, disobedient, and hard to control as opposed to settled, urban subjects were obedient. Even the term nomad was used pejoratively in many parts of the Middle Eastern world. This essential cultural distinction provided an ideological legitimization for imperial policies in tribal landscapes. Put another way, tribal policies of the nineteenth century imperial powers were mostly accompanied by a civilizing mission.

Michael Khodarkovsky indicates how Russian expansion in the southern steppes through the establishment of new settlements, colonies, and fortifications went hand on hand with a discourse of bringing civilization and Christianity to the "wild nomads" of the steppes.[420] In the same manner, Virginia Martin shows how the Russian civilizing mission in the Kazak steppes was reflected in Russian imperial

[420] Khodarkovsky, *Russia's Steppe Frontier*, 193.

law. She argues that starting in the eighteenth century, based on an idea that the Russians and the nomads of the steppes had different cultures and traditions, Russian authorities constructed a separate judiciary in the southern steppes that allowed nomads to practice their own legal customs while facilitating their incorporation into Russian imperial structure.[421] The regulations prepared by Russian officials emphasized the cultural distinctions between the nomads and settled communities and sought to bring civilization to the steppes, create loyal subjects, and "soften" the customs of the Kazak nomads by settling them, integrating them into the imperial structure, promoting agriculture, restricting their migration, and imposing a Russian understanding of crime and punishment.[422] The Russian perception of their own superiority was juxtaposed with their belief in the social and cultural inferiority of peripheral peoples, and the desire of the Russian authorities to bring these communities into the circle of civilization has been defined as Russian orientalism.[423]

Recently, Steven Sabol has focused on the Sioux of the North American plains and Kazaks of the Russian steppes to compare American and Russian expansion into tribal zones. He argues that the "Americans and Russians embraced numerous preconceived images of the Sioux and Kazaks as they ventured into the plains and steppe – particularly notions of their own superior culture, society, and civilization when compared to the savage nomads."[424] Sabol defines this process as "internal colonization." He argues that the internal colonization of the Americans and Russians differed from the overseas imperialism and colonization by Europeans in

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[421] Martin, "Barimta: Nomadic Custom, Imperial Crime," 254-265.
[422] Martin, *Law and Custom in the Steppe*, 34-36. Such a civilizing discourse was not only produced against the nomads, but seems to be in practice against the non-Russians, non-Christians and inhabitants of the mountainous areas. For Russian rule in the Caucasus Mountains of Georgian frontier and the imperial ideology and discourse against the local inhabitants, see Jersild, *Orientalism and Empire North Caucasus Mountain Peoples*, 3-37.
[423] David-Fox, Holquist, and Martin, *Orientalism and Empire in Russia*.
[424] Sabol, *"The Touch of Civilization,"* 8.

Asia and Africa. Despite differences, the Russians and Americans shared a civilizing philosophy and imperial ideology with European imperial powers.[425]

Like in the Russian and American cases, the extension of Ottoman state power into tribal geographies and the cooptation of tribal groups into imperial state structures were accompanied by a mission of civilization in the nineteenth century. The social and cultural status of nomadic tribal groups, in the view of the nineteenth century Ottoman bureaucrats, was inferior to that of settled and urban communities of the empire. Nomadic tribes, from an essentialist point of view, were treated as inherently wild, uncivil, and disobedient. They were regarded as a threat not only to the empire's modernizing project but also to its settled, obedient subjects. Usama Makdisi, who focuses on the Arab provinces of the empire, argues that the Ottoman reforms of the nineteenth century "created a notion of the pre-modern in the empire that resembled the way in which European colonial administrators represented their colonial subjects."[426] According to him, in an age of Ottoman modernization and centralization, the imperial capital treated its Arab provinces as "backward and… not yet Ottoman."[427] Thus, extension of the central power of the Ottoman Empire was accompanied not only by a mission of civilization but also by one of Ottomanizing the frontiers. Selim Deringil likewise shows how Ottoman bureaucrats of the second half of the nineteenth century used certain stereotypes and preconceived images of the nomadic tribes in official statements and how the discourse of extending of imperial rule was accompanied by one of bringing civilization to tribal geographies. Deringil argues that at some time during the nineteenth century, Ottoman bureaucrats and intellectuals adopted a colonialist stance toward the people of the empire's

[425] Sabol, *"The Touch of Civilization,"* 171-173.
[426] Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism," 769.
[427] Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism," 770.

periphery, which he defines as "borrowed colonialism".[428] According to Deringil, "For the Ottomans, colonialism was a survival tactic, and in this sense the Ottoman Empire can hardly be compared to the aggressive industrial empires of the west."[429]

Despite Arab, Kurdish and Turcoman tribal spaces were not colonial spaces of the Ottoman Empire, nomadic pastoralists stood in opposition to civil, urban, and agricultural lifestyles for Ottoman bureaucrats of the nineteenth century. Such a perception was sometimes used as a pretext by provincial governors, who were unable to maintain law, taxation and conscription in tribal spaces. Sometimes such a perception shaped the policies of the provincial governors regarding the various tribes of the empire.

The discourse and mission of civilizing tribal and mobile populations was clearly embedded within a discourse of their sedentarization.[430] Thus, bringing nomads into the circle of civilization became an important part of official Ottoman discourse.[431] In this conceptualization, the sedentarization of the nomads was the sine qua non for bringing nomads under state control and coopting their chiefs into the state administration.

4.2.1 The great sedentarization campaign

The sedentarization of nomadic tribes and their integration into the Ottoman administrative structure was neither a new nor entirely modern state policy. The

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[428] Deringil, ""They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery"." 313
[429] Deringil, ""They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery"," 313.
[430] There are several examples, to name a few: BOA, A.MKT. MHM 381/31 "*on sekiz kadar aşiretin cümleten iskanlarına teşebbüs olunması tasmim edilmiş tavattunlarıyla hem kendilerini nimet-i medeniyetten hissedar ve hem de ahaliyi vareste-i hasar etmek*" BOA, A.MKT.UM 239/26, 7 L 1272 (June 11, 1856)*"havâli-i merkumenin ıslâhatıyla 'aşâir-i merkume bi'l iskân hem ahâli ve fukaranın dest-i ta'addilerinden halâs olması ve hem de kendüleri tavr-i yabaniden çıkub hey'et-i mergube-i insaniyete girub zir'aat ve filâhet ve ticâretle meşgul olub hırsızlık ve uygunsuzluklarına meydân kalmaması*"
[431] Deringil, ""They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery"," 317.

mass deportation of various nomadic tribes from Anatolia to the Balkans and their sedentarization for the purposes of the colonization, Turkification and protection of the western frontiers were state policy during the early expansion of the Ottoman state.[432] However, during the early seventeenth century, just after the Celali revolts, Ottoman authorities developed a reactionary attitude towards the empire's nomadic tribal populations rather than pursuing planned policies of organized settlement and control.[433] During this period, after receiving uninterrupted complaints about the atrocities of tribal nomads, government officials sought to confine nomads to their traditional winter quarters or their pasturelands and force them to use migration routes reserved for them during their seasonal migrations.[434]

In the late seventeenth century, the sedentarization of nomadic tribes again turned into a major policy of the Ottoman imperial capital, which had served different purposes from those of previous centuries. Reşat Kasaba argues that starting in the late seventeenth century, mobility began to be perceived "not as an asset to be manipulated and taken advantage of but as a potential source of weakness to be contained."[435] This change in perception and policy had to do with developments over the course of the century. Increasing insecurity in the countryside, tribal atrocities against sedentary cultivators, mass migration from the countryside to urban centers, and an increasing need for revenues following long periods of war led Ottoman authorities to settle various nomadic tribes in areas of Central, Western, and

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[432] Barkan, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda bir İskan ve Kolonizasyon Metodu."; Barkan, "Osmanlı İmpratorluğunda bir İskan ve Kolonizasyon Metodu."; Inalcık, "Ottoman Methods of Conquest," 122-129.
[433] Celalis were mostly hired mercenaries, who after became unemployed turned into bandit bands. Their revolts, which lasted from the late sixteenth to the early seventeenth century turned several provinces od Anatolia into an insecure geography. See Inalcık, "Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire," 285.
[434] Refik, *Anadolu'da Türk Aşiretleri*, 67-73.
[435] Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire Ottoman Nomads, Migrants & Refugees,* 54.

Southern Anatolia as well as the Northern and Western Syria.[436] From the perspective of seventeenth-century Ottoman officials, the sedentarization of nomads prevented their atrocities against the peasantry, enabled the nomads to play a critical role in the maintenance of order in the countryside, and contributed to agricultural production in the empire. Exempting nomads from taxes and conscription during the sedentarization process, making entire tribes responsible (*kefâlete rabt*) for fines due on account of tribal members who abandoned settled life or committed crimes, decorating influential chiefs to maintain their loyalty, deporting tribal members to distant lands, and using military force were used to bring the nomads in line.[437]

Thus, Ottoman bureaucrats of the nineteenth century were neither unknowledgeable nor inexperienced when they initiated a large scale sedentarization campaign throughout the empire. Despite the continuity of sedentarization methods, Ottoman authorities adopted a more comprehensive, centrally-organized set of policies in various parts of the empire during the nineteenth century. Yonca Köksal argues that compared to earlier centuries, the sedentarization policy during the Tanzimat period was long term, permanent, and massive in scale. Whether they were disruptive or not vis-à-vis settled communities, all mobile groups within its realm were to be settled under the plans of the imperial capital.[438] According to Köksal, an important distinction from previous policies was the locations where sedentarization

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[436] Orhonlu, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Aşiretlerin İskanı*, 39-48. See also Halaçoğlu, *XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Iskan Siyaseti ve Aşiretlerin Yerleştirilmesi,* 28-42. Kasaba, "Do States Always Favor Statis?," 33-36.Various *hüküms* (order) of the late seventeenth century demonstrate that through sedentarization, the Ottomans did not entirely seek to put an end to the pastoral life of the nomads. Sedentarization in many parts of the empire meant turning nomads into transhumants. Various hüküms contain the statement that *"mevaşilerin mutadları üzre yaylaklara götürdüklerinde kendüler götürmeyüb ehlü ayalleriyle kendüler sayfu şitada mevazıı mezkurede sakin olub ancak çobanlar ile gönderüb kemakân rayittirmekde."* See Refik, *Anadolu'da Türk Aşiretleri*, 105, 109.

[437] For the methods of sedentarization carried out by the Ottoman officials during the late seventeenth century, see Refik, *Anadolu'da Türk Aşiretleri*, 96-132.

[438] Köksal, "Local Intermediaries and Ottoman State Centralization," 293.

would take place. Unlike in previous centuries, sedentarization was not carried out in formerly unused areas, but on the land that the nomads had been using as either winter quarters or summer pastures.[439] Regarding the methods of sedentarization, she asserts that large nomadic Turkish and Kurdish confederations of Central Anatolia, including the Cihanbeyli, Rişvan, Yeniil, and Afşar tribes, were sedentarized through coercion or negotiation with tribal chiefs during the Tanzimat era. According to Köksal, what determined the use of coercion or negotiation was geopolitical location, geographical boundedness, and the internal organization of the tribes. She argues that internally hierarchical, geographically bounded, and geopolitically frontier tribes were generally sedentarized through the use of mediation, while non-hierarchical, geographically scattered, inland tribes were settled through coercion.[440]

This dissertation argues that what made the sedentarization of the nomads more feasible during the nineteenth century was not merely the methods of sedentarization but rather the century's social, economic, and political developments that affected almost every sphere of life. The gradual expansion of state power into the tribal landscape and policies of forced settlement were clearly important factors in the sedentarization of the nomads; however, to treat the state as the sole actor in this transformation is misleading. Indeed, provincial and regional studies that focus on different parts of the Ottoman Empire as well as case studies of particular nomadic tribes indicate that the sedentarization of the tribes and the transformation of their internal structures were the outcomes of complex processes shaped by a variety of factors including the commercialization of agriculture, the demarcation of imperial boundaries, the replacement of indirect with direct rule, and the transformation of the land tenure system. Moreover, not all of these factors were in

[439] Köksal, "Local Intermediaries and Ottoman State Centralization," 297-298.
[440] Köksal, "Coercion and Mediation: Centralization and Sedentarization," 472-473.

play in the same place at the same time. Any one could have been more influential than the others. As shown in the following pages, the commercialization of agriculture was more influential in the sedentarization of pastoral nomads in Çukurova, Basra, and Syria than in Central Anatolia and Ottoman East in the long run.

Moreover, in the Ottoman context in the nineteenth century, the term sedentarization (*iskân*) was consistently used to refer a transition from a mobile, pastoral lifestyle to a settled, agricultural one. However, in many regions of the Ottoman Empire including the northeastern frontiers and Central Anatolia, the real outcome of the sedentarization policy was a transformation from a nomadic pastoral lifestyle to transhumance. In many regions, sedentarization campaigns in the Tanzimat period resulted in the emergence of transhumance where animal husbandry continued to be the main economic activity, albeit supported by a degree of agricultural production. In this situation, communities remained mobile though they did not engage in long distance migration.

In the 1830s, the Ottoman imperial capital and the provincial administration of Ankara inaugurated a large scale sedentarization campaign in Central Anatolia. The reasons for the sedentarization of the nomads were expressed in Ottoman bureaucratic documents as to protect the peasantry against nomadic atrocities, to reveal the tax and manpower potential of the tribes, to turn them into "peaceful" agricultural cultivators, and to repopulate centuries-long deserted territory.[441] Large Central Anatolian tribal confederations including the Rişvan, Yeniil, Afşar, and Cihanbeyli were "sedentarized" through the long-lasting efforts of the Ottoman

[441] Dede, "From Nomadism to Sedentary Life in Central Anatolia," 36-40. Orhonlu, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Aşiretlerin İskanı*, 113-120. Söylemez, *Osmanlı Devletinde Aşiret Yönetimi*, 163-172.

Empire.[442] Suat Dede points out that it took decades for Ottoman officials to settle the nomads of the Rişvan in the Haymana region of Central Anatolia, and even then many maintained a nomadic lifestyle in actuality.[443]

A similar sedentarization campaign was carried out in Southeastern Anatolia during the Tanzimat. Meltem Toksöz argues that before the nineteenth century, the Çukurova region was almost an uninhabited marshland visited only seasonally by nomadic populations. In the second half of the century, however, it turned into an important cotton producing and exporting region in the Eastern Mediterranean world with a developed port city: Mersin.[444] Toksöz argues that the region owed its transformation to internal dynamics, commercialization, nineteenth-century state reforms (namely the Land Code of 1858 and the Provincial Code of 1864), and changes to the global economy following the American Civil War.[445] The sedentarization of nomads and their participation in agricultural production (as either seasonal workers or landowners) played an important role in the transformation of the region.[446] An important step taken by the Ottoman state to sedentarize nomads was initiated in 1865 when the imperial capital deployed a large military detachment, known as the Reform Division (*Fırka-yı Islahiye*), to South Anatolia to topple the authority of local notables, sedentarize nomadic populations, integrate the region into the new administrative system, and provide for the security of the road connecting Istanbul to Syria, Egypt, and Mecca.[447] The Reform Division, under the command of Cevdet and Derviş pashas, pacified local Turcoman and Kurdish notables and the Gavur Dağı, Kürd Dağı, and Kozan Dağı tribes. The Reform Division managed to

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[442] Söylemez, *Osmanlı Devletinde Aşiret Yönetimi*, 172-176.
[443] Dede, "From Nomadism to Sedentary Life in Central Anatolia," 64.
[444] Toksöz, "Bir Coğrafya, Bir Ürün, Bir Bölge: 19. Yüzyılda Çukurova," 97.
[445] Toksöz, "Bir Coğrafya, Bir Ürün, Bir Bölge: 19. Yüzyılda Çukurova," 98.
[446] Toksöz, "Bir Coğrafya, Bir Ürün, Bir Bölge: 19. Yüzyılda Çukurova," 101.
[447] Gould, "Lords or Bandits," 497.

secure the loyalty of several tribal chiefs and notables with decorations, promotions, payments, and integration into the newly formed administrative structure. It used military force on those who refused to accept the new measures.[448] Despite the successful sedentarization of several households and the formation of new villages, towns, and administrative units, Toksöz argues that forced settlement did not mean immediate change from nomadism to sedentary life.[449] She emphasizes that it was mostly the commercialization of agriculture that facilitated the sedentarization of nomads. The commercialization of agriculture attracted many nomads and semi nomads to a settled, agricultural way of life.[450]

Ottoman lands in Syria were also host to several nomadic tribes including several sections of the Tay, Mawali, Shamar, and Anezeh. The seasonal migration of these nomads, which took place between wintering pastures in Badiyah and summer pastures in the transitional zone, was shaped by the availability of grazing land and the seasonal distribution of rainfall.[451] Norman Lewis asserts that during the first half of the nineteenth century, Syria was a sparsely populated, uncultivated region; moreover, agricultural villages in the transitional zone between cultivated and uncultivated land were under the constant threat of tribal groups and natural disasters.[452] The atrocities of the Shammar, in particular, extended as far as Urfa and caused great damage to the local peasantry.[453] The reforms of the second half of the nineteenth century sought to protect peasants and merchants from nomadic incursions, open up more land for cultivation, restore age-old trade roads, and settle

[448] Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton*.
[449] Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton*, 71.
[450] Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton*, 20, 73.
[451] Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 3-12.
[452] Lewis, "The Syrian Steppe During the Last Century of the Ottoman Rule," 34.
[453] Saydam, "Tanzimat Devrinde Halep ve Musul Dolaylarında Aşiretlerin Yol Açtıkları Asayiş Problemleri," 251.

the nomads. Despite tribal resistance to the new measures, nomads were subjected to increasing state control towards the end of the century, and a great number of nomads were gradually pushed into Badiyah, which the Ottomans called the *Çöl havalisi* (desert region). Their movements were restricted and they were forced to camp and graze in certain areas for which they were forced to pay. The *khuwwa*, a tax collected by the Bedouins from peasants and settled tribes in return for protection, was banned, and semi-nomadic tribes were escorted to their summer pastures by troops.[454] As in the case of Çukurova, the commercialization of agriculture was an important factor that contributed to the sedentarization of nomads.[455] As grain became an important export commodity, additional land was bought and opened for cultivation by various segments of Syrian society, new settlements were founded, and the populations of existing settlements gradually increased, all of which forced Bedouins to negotiate with administrative circles to benefit from the land as grazing grounds.[456]

The sedentarization policies in Iraqi provinces during the early Tanzimat years were less successful. Still, starting with the governorship of Midhat Pasha (1869-1874), some sections of the Anezeh, Shammar, and Muntafiq started to settle along the Euphrates and Shatt al Arab. Stephen Hemsley Longrigg argues that Midhat Pasha applied the method of selling great and small tracts of state land for favorable prices in return for cleaning canals and opening land up for cultivation.[457] Samira Haj similarly emphasizes the advent of the capitalist market and the implementation of the Land Code of 1858 in the transformation of the organization

[454] Lewis, "The Syrian Steppe During the Last Century of the Ottoman Rule," 36.
[455] For the commercialization of agriculture in Syria, see Schilcher, "Geç Osmanlı Suriye'sinde Tahıl Ekonomisi ve Büyük Ölçekli Ticarileşme Sorunu."
[456] Lewis, "The Syrian Steppe During the Last Century of the Ottoman Rule," 39-43; Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 46-57.
[457] Longrigg, *Four Centuries of Modern Iraq*, 305-311.

of tribes in Lower Mesopotamia. These two developments not only triggered a transformation from a nomadic to a sedentary lifestyle but also led to a shift from pastoral to agricultural economic activities.[458] The demand for wheat and barley on the international market encouraged nomads to settle and open up more land for cultivation. Haj estimates that in 1913, "over a million of the 1.6 million dunums of agricultural lands" were in newly sedentarized regions.[459] Following the application of the Land Code of 1858, the chief families among the Anezeh, Shammar, and Muntafiq, who bore the titles pasha, mutasarrıf, and kaymakam, managed to register large tracts of land in their names and used their official positions to control these lands through tenancy or sharecropping.[460]

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Despite such attempts at large scale sedentarization, a great number of nomadic families still resided in Ottoman domains in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Despite their intention to sedentarize the nomads, Ottoman bureaucrats were pragmatic in their attitude towards them and benefited from nomadic populations in economic, military, and even ideological terms. Despite the desire to sedentarize Central Anatolian nomads, Ottoman authorities used the camels of nomadic tribes for the transport of goods. They benefited from the cavalries of Kurdish nomads during the Crimean War, and took advantage of the Bedouins to protect the caravan roads.

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[458] Haj, *The Making of Iraq, 1900-1963*, 22.
[459] Haj, *The Making of Iraq, 1900-1963*, 23.
[460] Haj, *The Making of Iraq, 1900-1963*, 25. For the integration of these powerful families into administrative system of the Ottoman Empire, see Ceylan, "Carrot or Stick? Ottoman Tribal Policy in Baghdad, 1831-1876," 177-179. For the application of the Land Code of 1858 in Lower Iraq, especially in the region of Muntafiq, see Jwaideh, "Aspects of Land Tenure and Social Change in Lower Iraq."

4.3 Peopling the periphery, cultivating the land and increasing the trade

To understand Ottoman tribal policy along the northeastern frontiers of the empire during the Tanzimat era, the background of the social, political, and economic conditions of the region on the eve of the reform process is necessary. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman province of Erzurum had almost become depopulated. Wars with the Persian and Russian Empires in the 1820s, frequent famines following droughts, locust infestations, and epidemics, increasing atrocities by borderland tribes against peasant communities, over-taxation by local governors, and low security left most villages of the province uninhabited and uncultivated. In particular, villages of the sanjaks of Kars, Bayezid, and Van bordering Persia were almost uninhabited and had been turned into grazing grounds for various nomadic tribes of Ottoman-Persian borderland.

Among the wars, the Ottoman-Russian War of 1828-29 was the most disastrous. It not only ruined major towns and villages of Erzurum, Muş, Eleşgirt, and Bayezid but also caused a remarkable decline in the Armenian population. Tribal atrocities, over-taxation, destruction brought about by the war, and encouragement of Russian military officials led many Armenian families to migrate to Russian territory during the course of the war.[461] James Brant, the British consul of Erzurum, noted that the population of the city of Erzurum, which was the largest city on the northeastern frontier, was approximately 100 thousand before the destruction brought on by war. It dropped to 45,100 by 1846.[462] Bayezid, which had been an important frontier outpost of the Ottoman Empire in earlier centuries, almost turned into a

[461] Beydilli, *1828-1829 Osmanlı-Rus Savaşında Doğu Anadolu'dan Rusya'ya Göçürülen Ermeniler*, 383-392. Özcan, *Sosyal ve Ekonomik Etkileri Açisindan 1828-1829 Osmanlı-Rus Savaşı*, 169-209.
[462] FO 78/703, Henry H. Calvert, "Notes on the Topography, Trade and Manufactures, Agriculture, Climate and Natural History of the Pashalik of Erzeroom", Erzeroum, April 30, 1847. For the population of Erzurum before the mid-nineteenth century, see Özger, "Tanzimat Öncesi Erzurum Şehrinin Demogragfik Yapısı."

ghost town after the Ottoman-Russian War of 1828-29.[463] In the 1850s, Mehmed Hurşid Pasha noted that Armenians had previously constituted the majority in the town, yet their population had so declined that only 250 houses remained following the Persian and Russian invasions of the town during the wars of the 1820s.[464]

Among environmental disasters, a famine brought about by drought, plague, and a locust infestation in 1840 and 1841 was the most destructive. It left thousands dead and led a new wave of emigration from Ottoman Erzurum, Bitlis, Malazgirt, and Van to Persian and Russian territory.[465] The plague caused 7,455 deaths just in the city of Erzurum, while in Muş it led to the emigration of thousands.[466] Locust swarms in 1840 destroyed almost all the wheat and barley in the plain of Muş and resulted in another wave of emigration among Armenian families.[467] Kamili Pasha, the newly appointed governor of Erzurum, noted that almost 11 thousand Muslim and Christian families had left Muş and other sanjaks of Erzurum due to the famine, which had been ongoing for two years by 1841.[468] That same year, the sanjak of Bayezid also experienced a severe famine, and even trade caravans had difficulty finding food for their animals during their passage through the region.[469] The absence of roads and difficulty of transporting grain increased the prices of wheat and bread adding to the severity of the famines.[470]

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[463] Smith and Dwight, *Missionary Researches in Armenia* 415.
[464] Mehmed Hurşid, *Seyâhatnâme-ı Hudud*, 259-260.
[465] BOA, İ.DH. 63/3018, 25 Zilkade 1257 (January 8, 1842).
[466] FO 78/491, James Brant, "Report on the Trade of Erzeroom for 1841, and on the State of Pashalık", Erzeroom, January 20, 1842.
[467] FO 78/443, James Brant, "Report on the Trade of Erzeroom for 1840 and on the State of Pashalık", Erzeroom, January 21, 1841.
[468] Küçük, "Tanzimat Devri'nde Erzurum'da Nüfus Durumu," 187. See also BOA, I.DH 42/2048, *"iki seneden berü müstevli olan kaht u gala ve saireden dolayı Erzurum Eyâleti ahâlisi haylice sıkışmış ve Muş ve mülhakatı ve sair sancaklardan on bir bin haneden mütecaviz islam ve reaya şuraya buraya müteferrik ve perişan olarak binden ziyade fukara ve gureba dahi nefs-i Erzuruma gelmiş olduğu"*
[469] FO 78/443, James Brant, "Report on the Trade of Erzeroom for 1840 and on the State of Pashalık, Erzeroom", January 21, 1841.
[470] FO 78/443, James Brant, "Report on the Trade of Erzeroom for 1840 and on the State of Pashalık, Erzeroom", January 21, 1841; FO 78/443, From James Brant to John Bidwell, Erzeroom, September 30, 1841.

Asiatic cholera, after afflicting the greater parts of Persia in 1846 and Georgia in 1847, first appeared in Kars in the Ottoman Empire. It then spread to Çıldır and reached Erzurum in the summer of 1847. It affected poorer segments of the population more than wealthier ones. Brant noted that it caused 900-1000 deaths in Erzurum and 1000 in Kars.[471] Just a year later, in 1848, the administrative council of Kars reported that locusts had greatly damaged the fields, meadows, and pasturing grounds of the Şuragel and Kağızman districts, resulting in the displacement of the peasantry and the tribal population.[472] The responses of Ottoman provincial authorities to environmental disasters, however, remained reactive rather than proactive.[473]

Wars and environmental disasters were not the only reasons for population decline. Conflicts among the local dynasties, tensions between the imperial capital and local dynasties, tribal atrocities, over-taxation, and corvée – particularly of the Armenian peasantry – led to a constant flow of people from the province. Consul Brant reports that in 1843, nearly 840 Armenian families migrated from Muş due to problems of security and over-taxation, while many Kurdish peasants sought refuge among the tribes.[474] This is significant as it indicates that non-tribal Kurdish peasants became tribalized during times of insecurity and over-taxation.[475] One of the greatest burdens on the peasantry was the wintering of Kurdish nomads in peasant villages.

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[471] FO 78/752, J.R.L Dickson, "Memorandum Regarding the Cholera Morbus at Erzeroom in 1847", Erzeroom, December 20, 1847.
[472] BOA, A}MKT 142/8, (July 13, 1848), *Karsa tabii Şuragel ve Kağızman kazalarında zuhur eden çekirge bi'lkülliye karyelerinin ekin ve çayır ve meralarını telef ederek ahalileri kullarıyla aşiret halkının perişan ve perakende olmalarına müeddi olmuş."*
[473] The Ottoman reaction to the migration of people from the province to Russian and Persian lands was to bring them back through local diplomatic contacts. In time of famines, local authorities banned the exportation of grain from Erzurum to Iran, or transported grain from surrounding provinces to the famine site. FO 78/443, James Brant, "Report on the Trade of Erzeroom for 1840 and on the State of Pashalık", Erzeroom, January 21, 1841.
[474] FO 78/572, James Brant, "Memorandum Regarding the State of Moush" Erzeroom, December 9, 1844.
[475] Duman Koç, "Governing a Frontier Sancak in the Ottoman Empire," 124.

Various tribes of the Ottoman-Persian borderland, including the Cemaldini, Cunukî, Kaskanlı, Ademanlı, Celali, and Zilan, wintered in peasant villages for almost six months of the year and forced villagers to provide them with houses and food as well as fodder and stables for their animals without payment in return. In 1841, Kamili Pasha officially abolished this practice in the province of Erzurum as it contradicted the values of the Tanzimat.[476] Tribes were subsequently responsible for paying peasants if they spent winters in their villages. However, as one Ottoman official observed, tribal payments for using peasants' houses as winter quarters were rarely substantive, and the burden contributed to the migration of the peasantry from the region, leaving almost 100-150 villages of Abaga, Ahlat, Malazgirt, Tekman, Hınıs, and Bayezid uninhabited in the first half of the nineteenth century.[477]

Another cause for the decline in population was heavy taxes on the peasantry. In the 1840s, most villages of the northeastern frontiers of the empire had a self-sufficient peasant economy. Consul Brant argued that "grain producing plains, separated from each other by chains of mountains and… every region nearly confined to the consumption of its own inhabitants."[478] The absence of roads and the high cost of transporting agricultural products not only prevented the emergence of a functioning market economy but also made the region vulnerable to famine following droughts and locust swarms.[479] Local notables and monopolists stocked

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[476] FO 78/491, James Brant, "Report on the Trade of Erzeroom for 1841, and on the State of Pashalık", Erzeroom, January 20, 1842.
[477] BOA, I.MSM 51/1334, (1848) *"Tanzimat-ı hayriyenin icrâsından sonra ekrad-ı merkume zad ve zehairelerini akçesiyle almak üzere tenbihat-ı lazıme icra olunmuş ise de öteden berü mekt ve mecanen almağa alışmış olduklarından akçe verseler dahi devede kulak hükmünde bile olmayarak"*
[478] FO 78/613, James Brant, Memorandum on the Means of Advancing the Prosperity of the İnhabitants of the Pashalik of Erzeroom, Erzeroom, June 9, 1845.
[479] FO 78/613, James Brant, Memorandum on the Means of Advancing the Prosperity of the İnhabitants of the Pashalik of Erzeroom, Erzeroom, June 9, 1845. Brant argues that "in abundant seasons, the price declines so materially that the cultivator is hardly remunerated his labor and the following year he sow less, but if several good harvest succeed each other, the price becomes so extremely low, that the production decreased sensibly"

grain and increased the prices of wheat and bread, further contributing to the vulnerability of the populace.[480] The decline in population also entailed a further increase in the tax burden on the peasantry. Since the taxes to be paid were determined on a collective basis, the remaining peasants had to pay the same amount of tax determined according to the previous years' surveys.[481] From the 1830s to 1850s, the Ottoman provincial administration had to carry out numerous fiscal surveys in Erzurum to reassess the amount of the poll tax since peasants opted to migrate rather than pay higher taxes. In 1844, the villages of Muş paid 1100 to 1200 lire for *saliane* [yearly tax], whereas they had paid 500 lire in 1843. The same absolute amount had been demanded when the population was triple the size.[482]

Early population surveys provide partial information about the population of the province of Erzurum and its sanjaks of Kars, Bayezid, and Van. An empire-wide population survey in the 1830s was partially carried out in the eastern provinces. A second, large scale population survey was carried out in Erzurum, Kars, and Van in 1848, just one year after resistant local Kurdish emirates/dynasties had been disempowered. Despite its piecemeal application, the survey of 1848 is informative with respect to the population density of some districts on the eastern frontier.[483] According to this survey, the sanjak of Kars had 7,048 households consisting of 5,678 Muslim, 1,065 Armenian, and 215 tribal households.[484] Until the late nineteenth century, Ottoman authorities were unable to carry out a population survey

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[480] FO 78/401, From James Brant to Palmerston, Erzeroom, May 4, 1840.
[481] Küçük, "Tanzimat'ın İlk Yıllarında Erzurum'un Cizye Geliri ve Reaya Nüfusu," 218.
[482] FO 78/572, James Brant, "Memorandum Regarding the State of Moush" Erzeroom, December 9, 1844.
[483] The population survey of 1848, caried out in the province of Erzurum, do not provide the lists of each male individuals. Yet, it gives information about the total inhabitants of each village, their religious compostion, the amount of tribal and nontribal settlers, the total amounts of males who phsysically fits to army. For the 1848 population suvey, see BOA, C.DH 193/9608. For later icmal registeries which was based on this survey, see BOA, NFS.d 2801 and BOA, NFS.d 3735.
[484] BOA, NFS.d 2801, In 1848, the sub-province of Kars composed of Nefs-i Kars, Şuragel, Taht, Zaruşad, Kağızman and Keçivan.

in the sub-province of Bayezid because of its highly-mobile, tribal population. According to Mehmed Hurşid Paşa, the sub-province of Bayezid had 4,225 households comprised of 2,678 Muslim, 1,171 non-Muslim, and 376 Yezidi households in the mid-nineteenth century.[485] The 1848 survey is also incomplete for the sub-province of Van. According to the survey, 6,493 Muslim households lived throughout the sub-province, but the non-Muslim population of several districts – including the city of Van itself – was not specified in the register. However, according to Hurşid Paşa, setting aside the tribal population, there were 19,507 Muslim males and 25,723 non-Muslim males in the province of Van.[486]

Determining a precise number for the nomadic population of the province of Erzurum in the first half of the nineteenth century is more difficult. The province was host to not only several local tribes but also was visited seasonally by Ottoman-Persian borderland nomads as well as nomads coming from the Diyarbekir region. In addition to their mobility, the rapidly changing loyalties of smaller nomadic groups made it even more difficult to determine reliable numbers for given tribes. According to Hurşid Paşa, during the 1850s the population of the largest tribes along the northeast Ottoman-Persian border in the 1850s amounted to 5380 households consisting of 1500 Zilan, 1500 Haydaran, and 2380 Celali households.[487] Derviş Paşa, during his visit to the borderland around the same time, listed slightly different numbers for these three tribes. According to him, the 2290 Zilan, 2000 Haydaran, and 2500 Celali households amounted to 6790 households total in 1859.[488] Both

[485] Mehmed Hurşid, *Seyâhatnâme-ı Hudud*, 259. According to the same source, the sanjak of Bayezid was composed of the Kazas of Bayezid, Eleşgirt, Karakilise, Diyadin, Hamur and Patnos.
[486] Mehmed Hurşid, *Seyâhatnâme-ı Hudud*, 231. According to Hurşid Pasha, the province of Van was composed of the kazas of Van, Erciş, Adilcevaz, Ahlat, Gevaş, Müküs, Vustan, Nordoz and Satak.
[487] Mehmed Hurşid, *Seyâhatnâme-ı Hudud*, 259-267.
[488] "Tâhdîd-i hudûdd-ı İraniye'ye memur Ferik saadetlu Derviş Paşa hazretlerinin […] arz ve takdim eylediği müzekkiredir", Matbaa-yı Amire, Ş 21 sene 1286, 137.

Hurşid and Derviş Pashas expressed that these figures were based on information obtained from local informants and were thus anecdotal. The Russian Consul of Erzurum, Alexander Jaba, stated the total number of the tents of the tribes of the Ottoman, Russian, and Persian frontier regions (including Kars, Van, and Bayezid) was 16,529. This number included the Zilan, Celali, Sepki, Haydaran, and Şikaki tribes as well as several smaller tribes of the districts of Bayezid and Van, which were close to the Russian and Persian borders.[489] The subjecthood of all these tribes was contested among the empires. As the following lines indicate, one aim of the Ottoman Empire was to gain the loyalty of these tribes and to settle them in deserted villages on the northeastern frontier.

Following the Treaty of Baltalimanı (a free trade agreement) in 1838, British authorities tried to increase their economic influence in Ottoman territories. With respect to the province of Erzurum, the main concern of the British Empire was the construction and protection of a road connecting Tabriz to the port of Trabzon, which was the shortest and cheapest route connecting Europe to Persia and India.[490] A functioning road between the port and the Persian border, according to British authorities, would not only increase the consumption of British goods in the Ottoman East but also increase British-Persian-Indian trade. The British Consul of Erzurum, James Brant, emphasized in several meetings with the governors of Erzurum the importance of such a road and its protection from tribal groups, especially from those who migrated across the borders of the Persian and Ottoman empires. He stated that in early 1840, the insecurity of the province was the result of misrule by local hereditary Kurdish houses, whose retinues protected the Kurdish tribes and even

[489] Jaba, *Recueil de Notices et Récits Kourdes*, 1-4.
[490] For a detailed history of the Trabzon-Bayezid road, see Özkan, "A Road in Rebellion, A History on the Move."

benefited from pillage they carried out.[491] Starting in the early 1840s, he repeatedly proposed the removal of the Kurdish dynasties that occupied the eastern posts as well as the pacification of the nomads who roamed the Ottoman-Persian borderland.[492]

For the prosperity of the region, Consul Brant also proposed a customhouse and quarantine at the Persian border and a military post in the district of Bayezid in addition to the road connecting Trabzon and the Persian frontier.[493] The road, according to him, would not only increase transit trade from Persia but also integrate Erzurum into international trade. An integrated economy would not only prompt peasants to cultivate the land but also avert the severity of the famines and the necessity of emigration from the province. A military post in Bayezid would prevent the migration of Persian nomadic tribes into Ottoman territory and protect the peasantry from the atrocities of the Ottoman and Persian tribes. The quarantine at the border would prevent the spread of contagious diseases into the empire, and finally, a customhouse in Bayezid would prevent smuggling and lead to an increase in tax revenues from the import and export of goods.[494]

Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, these points were repeatedly put on the agenda by the Ottoman imperial capital as well as by the governors of Erzurum. The prosperity and welfare of the region, according to Ottoman officials, depended on the protection of its peasants from tribal incursions, on a functioning road connecting Trabzon to the Persian border that would be protected against tribal attack, on solving border disputes with the Persian Empire,

[491] FO 78/653, From James Brant to Sir Stanford Canning, Erzeroom, April 24, 1846.
[492] FO 78/366, From James Brant to Viscount Palmerston Erzurum, August 14, 1839.
[493] FO 78/613, James Brant, "Memorandum on the Means of Advancing the Prosperity of the inhabitants of the Pashalik of Erzeroom", Erzeroom, June 9, 1845.
[494] FO 78/613, James Brant, "Memorandum on the Means of Advancing the Prosperity of the inhabitants of the Pashalik of Erzeroom, Erzeroom", June 9, 1845.

and on establishing a fair tax system to prevent depopulation.[495] In 1841, the governor of Erzurum, Hafız Pasha, was dismissed from his position, it was argued that Erzurum could not be compared to other provinces because of its geopolitical importance and its tribal population. Thus, its governor should be fearless in handling these matters.[496]

4.4 Tanzimat state and nomadic tribes of the northeastern frontiers

The tribal policy of the Ottoman Empire on its northeastern frontiers was shaped by the aforementioned concerns. The nomadic Zilan, Celali and Haydaran tribes, which roamed the intersection of the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires, had a population of between 1,500 and 2,500 households each. This number was roughly equal to the populations of each of the districts of the northeastern frontier of the Ottoman Empire. For Ottoman authorities, securing the loyalty of these tribes, integrating them into the Ottoman imperial structure, and settling them in the deserted villages on the northeastern frontiers of the empire would bear much fruit.

First, it would facilitate the administration, taxation, and conscription of tribal groups since carrying these out among mobile peoples was always much more difficult than among settled populations. Their successful sedentarization would repopulate a region that had been deserted for decades because of wars among the Russian, Ottoman, and Persian Empires, of tribal atrocities, and of the frequent famines in recent decades. Sedentarization of the nomads and their integration into the imperial structure would undoubtedly generate revenue and manpower in this

[495] Küçük, "Tanzimat Devrinde Erzurum," 179-251.
[496] Küçük, "Tanzimat Devrinde Erzurum," 179.

frontier region that Ottoman authorities did not want to lose to the Persians or Russians.

Second, from the perspective of the Ottoman imperial and provincial administrations, the settlement of nomads would also increase the security of the region. Once equipped with the necessary means to survive, nomads would no longer choose to engage in banditry of settled cultivators and trade caravans passing through the region. Third, the sedentarization of the nomads and turning them into Ottoman subjects would beget a stable border and more peaceful relations with the Russians and Persians since the migrations of the nomads over the borders was perceived as a threat to the imperial integrity and territorial sovereignty of the three imperial powers.

Yet the tribal policy of the Ottoman Empire on its northeastern frontiers evolved to be highly complex since it was interrelated with several variables. Securing the loyalty of these tribes, turning them into Ottoman subjects, and sedentarizing them was dependent on the pacification of the Kurdish dynasties and their replacement with centrally-appointed governors. Moreover, the determination of the subjecthood of the tribes and the demarcation of the boundaries dividing the Ottoman Empire from the Persian and Russian Empires were also prerequisites in the minds of Ottoman bureaucrats. In spite of the visions, aims, and projects of the imperial capitals and provincial centers, in practice, state-tribe encounters at the local level proved much more complicated and multifarious. Scott's concepts of "legibility" and "transformative simplification" provide important insight into state penetration into society;[497] however, they explain little about the responses of civil

[497] For a critique of the Scott's book, *Seeing Like a State*, see Tilly, "Survey Article: Power - Top Down and Bottom Up."

society groups to the expanding state and little about the complexities of state-tribe relations.

As Sabri Ateş argues, the transition from indirect to direct rule in the eastern frontiers of the empire went hand in hand with determining the boundary between the Ottoman and Persian Empires. Between 1840 and 1850, as Ottoman imperial capital gradually pacified the Kurdish dynasties, the imperial capital was also carrying out negotiations and surveys to resolve border disputes with the Persian Empire. These two processes are analyzed in the following sections.

4.4.1 Eliminating the ancien regime

In frontier provinces of the empire, reforms to the administrative, fiscal, and military structure of the empire were unimaginable without curbing the power of local power holders who governed the sanjaks as yurtluk-ocaklıks who bore the official title of mutasarrıf appropriated the agricultural surplus, and maintained the monopoly over violence. As discussed in previous chapters, in the Ottoman East, local hereditary families that governed frontier sanjaks owed their economic power to large tracts of agricultural land allocated for their use either as yurtluk-ocaklık and/or as lifetime tax farms. In addition to their economic power, these local power holders also had the military support of nomadic tribes in return for granting pasturing grounds and winter quarters within their domains.

For the eastern frontier provinces of the Ottoman Empire, the early Tanzimat reforms by and large entailed the pacification of hereditary local houses either through their integration into the new administrative structure or their replacement

with centrally-appointed officials.[498] By the mid-nineteenth century, all the sanjaks on the eastern frontier previously governed by Kurdish notable families were ruled by centrally-appointed *kaimakam* (the administrator of a sanjak early in the Tanzimat period). Another novel aspect of the reforms in the provinces was administrative councils formed at various levels of provincial administration.[499]

Despite the general outline, the expansion of Ottoman state power in frontier regions was neither universal nor did it always remain a top-down process. As several scholars note, the expansion of state power during the Tanzimat era in different provinces of the Ottoman Empire was shaped by a variety of local dynamics and responses.[500] Likewise, the transformation of the political, fiscal, and administrative structure on the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire was neither top down nor simply a military confrontation between a centralizing, modernizing imperial state and resistant hereditary dynasties. Rather it was shaped by a variety of local parameters including times of war and peace with the Qajar and Russian Empires, the demographic composition of the region (i.e., nomadic or settled), and the responses of local Kurdish dynasties to the ongoing imperial reforms.

The Ottoman-Qajar and Ottoman-Russian wars between 1820 and 1830, the wars with Mehmed Ali Pasha of Egypt in the 1830s, the disputes over border between the Ottoman and Persian Empires, and the disputes over the subjecthood of the tribes living in the Ottoman-Persian borderland caused many of the centralizing

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[498] Inalcık, "The Application of the Tanzimat and Its Social Effects." For a general outline on the application of Tanzimat reforms in the Ottoman East, see Çadırcı, "Tanzimat'ın Uygulanması ve Karşılaşılan Güçlükler (1840-1856)."
[499] Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Sürecinde Türkiye Ülke Yönetimi*, 259-285.
[500] Blumi, *Rethinking the Late Ottoman Empire*; Köksal, "Tanzimat ve Tarih Yazımı." For Kurdish periphery, see Gündoğan, "The Making of the Modern Ottoman State in the Kurdish Periphery"; Bayraktar, "Yurtluk-Ocaklıks: Land, Politics of Notables and Society."

reforms as well as population and fiscal surveys to be postponed, leading to a long reform process entailing conflicts and complex negotiations in many regions.[501] The Ottoman imperial capital needed the military support of these local dynasties in each of the aforementioned crises as well as their local knowledge and information. From the 1820s to the late 1840s, the members of these local dynasties were kept on as the administrators of their districts albeit with different titles and roles. Yet their authority and economic power were diminished as the following lines reveal.

The transformation of the administrative and fiscal organization of the sanjak of Bayezid was a long, uneven process – a pendulum swinging between limitations imposed on the fiscal and political autonomy of the hereditary family and the privileges and immunities given to them. A local Kurdish family later referred to as the descendants of Ishak Pasha or Mahmud Pasha the Great had governed the sanjak of Bayezid as a yurtluk-ocaklık since the late seventeenth century.[502] Their knowledge of the local population, especially of the nomadic tribes of the Ottoman-Persian and Ottoman-Russian borderlands, their ability to mobilize local tribes during crises with the Persians and Russians, and their knowledge of the borders dividing Ottoman territories from Persian and Russian ones enabled the family to remain influential in frontier politics until the late 1840s.[503]

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[501] Duman Koç, "Governing a Frontier Sancak in the Ottoman Empire," 113-159.

[502] Karataş, Bayezid Sancağı ve İdarecileri (1700-1914). Çiftçi argues that family members were actually descendants of the Silemani Confederation of the sixteenth century Diyarbekir region, who migrated to the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire and became the rulers of the sanjak of Bayezid since then. See Çiftçi, "Migration, memory and mythification: relocation of Suleymani tribes," 4-6.

[503] During the delimitation of the Ottoman-Persian boundary, the Ottoman boundary commission benefited from the testimonies of local Kurdish dynasties. Especially, yurtluk-ocaklık certificates formerly granted to the Kurdish families confirming their hereditary rights on certain plot of lands were later used by boundary commission to claim these lands from the Persian Empire. For instance, Ottoman authorities, by using the testimonies of Behlül Pasha and imperial certificates given to the family members, claimed that Persian town of Maku had been part of the Ottoman Empire. See BOA, I. HR 65/3194, (1850).

Nevertheless, during the first half of the nineteenth century, the economic and political power of the family lessened to a great extent. Karataş shows how starting in the early nineteenth century, this local dynasty gradually lost its economic and political power and privileges because of rivalries with neighboring dynasties, wars with the Persians and Russians, and increasing intervention by the Ottoman imperial capital.[504] Following the integration of the region into the Tanzimat program, Behlül Pasha, who would be the last to rule Bayezid as a yurtluk-ocaklık, was coopted into the newly created administrative structure through appointment as the kaimakam of the sanjak. He had already been compelled to make payments of cash to the imperial capital, a practice unknown to his ancestors because of the weak presence of the imperial center in the region.[505] As in other provinces of the empire, a local council was formed in Bayezid whose members were selected from among less powerful Kurdish and Armenian notables. Behlül Pasha's eventual removal from his post was the corruption in which his family members engaged with respect to the fiscal and administrative matters of the sanjak.[506] Family members were accused of appointing puppets to the local council and of overtaxing the peasantry and the tribal population. In 1849, Behlül Pasha was removed and replaced by a centrally-appointed kaimakam. Nevertheless, he was granted a monthly salary in return for lands confiscated from him.[507]

A similar process took place in the sanjak of Muş. Duman Koç argues that the local dynasts of Muş, known as Alaaddin Pashazades, managed to remain as administrators of the sanjak until the end of the 1840s as mutasarrıf, mütesellim

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[504] Karataş, *Bayezid Sancağı ve İdarecileri (1700-1914)*, 41-109.
[505] Karataş, *Bayezid Sancağı ve İdarecileri (1700-1914)*, 92.
[506] For a discussion about the tensions between Ottoman imperial capital and provincial governors in relation to the new criminal law, see Kırlı, "Yolsuzluğun icadı: 1840 Ceza Kanunu, İktidar ve Bürokrasi."
[507] Karataş, *Bayezid Sancağı ve İdarecileri (1700-1914)*, 101-104.

(deputy administrator), and kaymakam. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the family explored every avenue from open rebellion to negotiating with state circles to maintain power in the sanjak. As in the case of Bayezid, their ability to influence nomadic tribes, their knowledge of the geography and of demographic structure, their ability to mobilize the tribes for wars against the Russians and Persians, and their mediating role in the pacification of other Kurdish dynasties enabled them to maintain influence in the region until 1850. While promising to implement the reform package in districts under their rule, the family sought to consolidate power at every turn. In 1834, Emin Pasha, a member of the dynasty and the mutasarrıf of Muş, promised to conscript men into the imperial army, the *Asâkir-i Mansûre-i Muhammediye* (Trained Victorious Soldiers of Muhammed), formed during the reign of Mahmud II, in return for maintaining his post.[508] Later, when the province of Erzurum was brought under the Tanzimat program in 1845, provincial authorities in Erzurum had difficulty carrying out population and fiscal surveys because of the mobility of the local tribes. Şerif Bey, another member of the local dynasty of Muş, was appointed as kaymakam to ease the reform process because of his knowledge of the geography and his years of experience in the region.[509]

However, the economic power of the family was curbed to a large extent. The yurtluk-ocaklık status of Muş had already changed in the 1830s. Family members managed to keep the revenues from twenty-four villages of Muş, but the revenues of the other villages of the sanjak were directed to the imperial treasury through tax farming. By the 1840s, the family was incorporated into the newly established Tanzimat institutions as kaymakams. However, in the end, members of the family were removed from their posts and exiled from their homeland. Like other local

[508] Duman Koç, "Governing a Frontier Sancak in the Ottoman Empire," 100.
[509] Duman Koç, "Governing a Frontier Sancak in the Ottoman Empire," 138.

dynasties, they were given monthly salaries in return for the villages confiscated from them, and as was the case for other salaried Kurdish dynasties, the amount of this monthly stipend remained a matter of bargaining between the family members and the imperial capital until the demise of the empire.[510]

The transformation of administrative and fiscal structures on the eastern frontier was not always smooth. The reaction of local power holders in the sanjak of Van to the implementation of the Tanzimat turned into an open rebellion in 1845. Consul Brant recounted that the local power holders in the city of Van, under the leadership of the Timur Pashazades, rejected any external governor except their own choice, refused to furnish military recruits, declined the opening of a garrison, and disallowed the implementation of the Tanzimat in the sanjak.[511] The revolt of city's inhabitants found a range of supporters and a network of allies among other notables of the Ottoman East, including Kör Hüseyin Bey of Acara, Khan Mahmud of Van, Nurullah Bey of Hakkari, Bedirkhan Bey of Cizre, and several less powerful local dynasts who feared that centralizing policies would lessen their power.[512] However, this alliance did not last to the end. The rebellion, known in the literature as the Bedirkhan Pasha Revolt, continued from 1845 to 1847. It was the largest rebellion against the Tanzimat reforms on the eastern frontiers of the empire and was suppressed only with a large military operation.[513] Following its suppression, the Ottoman imperial capital secured the loyalty of several less powerful notables by

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[510] Duman Koç, "Governing a Frontier Sancak in the Ottoman Empire," 174-184.
[511] FO 78/703, James Brant, "Report on the trade of Erzeroom, and on the state of Pashalık for 1846", Erzeroom, January 30, 1847, See also: BOA, I.MSM 49/1231 *"Tanzimat-ı hayriyenin icrasından dolayı Van ahâlisi haklarında derkar bulunan lütf ve merhamet-i şahânenin kadr ve şükrünü bilmeyerek bazı erbab-ı mefsedetin eracif ve ekazibini ser rişte fesad ederek kaimakam atufetlü Seri Paşa bendlerlerini koymayub iade etmiş olduklarından"*
[512] For a detailed account of the revolts of Bedirkhan Bey, Khan Mahmud, and other Kurdish notables against the application of the Tanzimat, see Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Begelerinde Kürtler*, 157-256. See also Kardam, *Cizre-Bohtan Beyi Bedirhan*.
[513] Gencer, "Merkezilesme Politikaları Sürecince Yurtluk-Ocaklık Sisteminin Değişimi," 146-201.

promising them positions in the newly formed administrative structure, but it exiled powerful ones to western territories of the empire. Among the latter were Bedirkhan Bey, Khan Mahmud, and Nurullah Bey, who were also given monthly salaries in return for the villages confiscated from them.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the sanjaks of Bayezid, Muş, and Van were no longer ruled by hereditary Kurdish dynasties but by centrally-appointed officials. In each of these sanjaks, administrative councils were formed whose members were selected from among local Kurdish, Turkish, and Armenian notables. In coming decades, these councils would be critical for maintaining the administrative, fiscal, and political matters of the sanjaks. As seen in the following chapter, such changes to the political organization of the empire on eastern frontiers created new institutional and political spaces for the Kurdish tribes.

4.4.2 The making of the imperial boundaries

The tribal policy of the Ottoman Empire was also deeply related to border disputes with Persian and Russian Empires. As the Ottoman Empire expanded its central authority towards its frontier regions, replacing local Kurdish emirates/dynasties with centrally-appointed governors, it also took steps to resolve border disputes with first the Persian and then the Russian Empire. The source of contention between the Ottoman and Persian Empires were the undefined nature of the order, the violation of the "border" by migrating nomads, the undefined subjecthood of these nomads, their raiding activities on both sides of the border, and the protection given to them by the Kurdish dynasties. Especially, border-spanning migrations of the tribes in the late

1830s and early 1840s occupied an important place in diplomatic relations between Ottoman and Persian Empires.[514]

In early 1840s, tensions along the border resulted in the mobilization of the armies of both sides and preparation for war.[515] As the Ottomans were mobilizing their army, most Kurdish tribes in northwestern Persia left for the border and offered their military services to Ottoman authorities.[516] Persian authorities openly accused Ottoman frontier pashas of inviting Kurdish tribes to Ottoman territory and of supporting and encouraging plunder on the Persian side of the border. Likewise, the British Consul of Erzurum, James Brant, accused Behlül Pasha, the mutasarrıf of Ottoman Bayezid, of inviting the Sepki and Celali Kurds to Ottoman territory, causing problems with Persia.[517] Corresponding claims were made by Ottoman authorities who accused Persian governors of supporting the various crimes of Kurdish tribes on the Ottoman side of the border. In 1840, it was reported that Kasım Agha of the Haydaran tribe and Huseyin Agha of the Zilan along with the Celali tribe jointly organized the plunder of the villages of Van with the encouragement and support of Persian authorities.[518] Mutual accusations notwithstanding, tribal discontent with the new atmosphere of the borderland was used by both Ottoman and Persian authorities.

In October 1842, Khodadad Khan, the commander of the Persian armies in Azerbaijan, complained to Ottoman authorities about the aggressions of "Persian

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[514] FO 78/491, "Translation of Kiamily Pasha's Letter, in Answer to one Addressed to him by Mr. Brant", August 28, 1842.
[515] Indeed, Ottoman authorities calculated that they could mobilize 24.854 soldiers, 5.000 of which were Kurdish cavalries from the tribes of Bayezid and Van. BOA, I.MSM 38/1063 (1842). See also FO 78/491, From Consul James Brant to Lord of Aberdeen K. J., Erzeroom, July 29, 1842.
[516] FO 78/491, From Consul James Brant to Lord of Aberdeen K. J., Erzeroom, July 29, 1842. The governor of Erzurum refrained from reacting to the appeal of Kurdish tribes, most probably fearing that it would further increase tensions between the two empires.
[517] FO 78/491, From Consul James Brant to Lord of Aberdeen K. J., Erzeroom, July 29, 1842.
[518] BOA, İ.MSM 37/1048, 1256 (1840).

Kurds" who had taken refuge in the Ottoman Empire. He argued that if Ottoman authorities did not return them to Persian territory, the Persian army would bring them back to their country forcibly.[519] In reply, Ottoman authorities argued that the Persian Kurds had also ruined villages in the Ottoman Empire and that the time was not the right to surrender these Kurds to Persian authorities.[520] Despite the deployment of troops, tensions between the two empires did not turn into open war. The emergence of the Russian and British Empires on the scene resulted first in the gradual withdraw of their armies from the frontier and later a long process of negotiations known as the Erzurum Conference.

4.4.3 The Erzurum Conference (1843-1847)

During the Erzurum Conference, topics ranged from disputes over the districts of Sulemania, Muhammarah, and Zehav, Persian refugees, commercial relations between the empires, the treatment of Persian pilgrims in Ottoman territories, and finally, the subjecthood of the borderland tribes.[521] Besides Ottoman and Persian delegates, Russian and British representatives were present in these meetings. One meeting of the conference, held in February 1844, was devoted to the determination of the subjecthood of tribes who moved fluidly across the borders of the two empires. In this meeting, the Ottoman Empire was represented by Enveri Efendi, a member of the Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinances, while the Persian Empire was represented by Mirza Taki Khan, the Persian vizier.[522] The discussion of borderland tribes was a clear sign of the transformation taking place in the

[519] FO 78/491, From Consul James Brant to Stanford Canning, Erzurum, October 24, 1842.
[520] FO 78/491, From Consul James Brant to Stanford Canning, Erzurum, October 24, 1842.
[521] For a detailed account of the Erzurum conference, see Aykun, "Erzurum Konferans (1843-1847) ve Osmanlı-Iran Hudut Antlaşması."; Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands,* 86-129.
[522] Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*; Aykun, "Erzurum Konferans (1843-1847) ve Osmanlı-Iran Hudut Antlaşması," 153-168.

borderland, the multiple loyalties of the tribes, the imposition of imperial identities, and the histories invented for this purpose.

During this meeting, Enveri Efendi started his speech by recalling an article related to the Haydaran and Sepki tribes in the Erzurum Treaty of 1823. According to Article 3 of the Erzurum Treaty, the Haydaran and Sepki tribes could remain in Ottoman territory but would be prevented from raiding in Persia. Moreover, they would be allowed to return to Iran permanently if they were so inclined. If they chose this option, Ottoman authorities would no longer receive them in Ottoman territory. It further stated that Iranian authorities would prohibit them from raiding in Ottoman territory once they passed over into the domain of the Qajar."[523] Nevertheless, since the time of this treaty, some from among these two tribes had crossed the Ottoman-Iranian "border" several times, and it was difficult to determine which belonged to the Ottomans and which to the Persians. During the meeting, Enveri Efendi stated that in line with the former treaty, Ottoman authorities would not prevent the tribes that had migrated from Iranian to Ottoman territory from returning to Persia.[524]

Regarding the Celalis, Enveri Efendi emphasized that they were currently spread among three different regions. One segment of the Celalis was roaming around the Persian district of Maku, another the slopes of Mount Ağrı, and the last the Russian district of Revan. He further argued that the decision of the commission regarding the Celalis must be put in practice. The Cemaldini tribe, according to Enveri Efendi, was a subsection of the Zilan Confederation. Currently, one part of the tribe resided in the Şuragel and Kağızman districts of the Ottoman Empire while the remaining part lived in Russian Revan. Enveri Efendi also asserted that since the Cemaldinis were Ottoman subjects, Persian authorities had no right to claim them.

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[523] Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands,* 56-57.
[524] Aykun, "Erzurum Konferans (1843-1847) ve Osmanlı-Iran Hudut Antlaşması," 154.

According to Enveri Efendi, the Cunukî tribe, which was another subsection of the Zilan Confederation, had migrated to Persia as visitors during the Ottoman war with the Russians in 1828-29. Although some families of the Cunukî had migrated to Persia on one or two occasions, they were true Ottoman subjects (*tebaa-i sahiha*) and had resided in Kars since time immemorial. After mentioning several other tribes of the southern borderland, Enveri Efendi ended his speech by proposing the appointment of Russian and British mediators to visit the camps of the Haydaran, Celali, and Sepki tribes to determine their subjecthood. He expressed that those tribes willing to migrate to Persia would not be prevented from doing so by Ottoman authorities.[525]

Mirza Taki Khan, the representative of the Qajar Empire, presented a much more detailed account of the tribes who roamed the intersection of Ottoman, Persian, and Russian lands. He insisted that all of the aforementioned tribes had been subjects of the Persian Empire. Regarding the Haydaran tribe, he argued that it was one of the eighteen clans (*oymak*) of the Dunbuli Confederation that had resided in the district of Khoy since the time of the Safavids.[526] He added that their traditional winter quarters were in the vicinity of the towns of Khoy and Karakoyun and that they were from the lineage of Ali Ağa (the father of Kasım and Sultan Aghas mentioned in the chapter 3) who was a bona fide Persian subject. Mirza Taki argued that following the Ottoman-Iranian War of 1821-22, Sultan Agha stayed in the Ottoman Empire, but the majority of the tribe decided to live in Persia under the leadership of his brothers, Kasım, Haydar Han, Ferhad, Ali, and Ibrahim Aghas. When Hafız Pasha was appointed governor of Erzurum in 1839, Sultan Agha was imprisoned for a crime he

[525] Aykun, "Erzurum Konferans (1843-1847) ve Osmanlı-Iran Hudut Antlaşması," 158.
[526] Foreign Office 424/7B, Protocol of the Fifteenth Conference, Procès-Verbal de la Quinzième Conférence, qui eut lieu a Erzeroum le 6 février, 1844, pour l'Exposition des Réclamations turco-persanes, February 6th 1844, 152.

had committed in Ottoman territory, yet he later managed to escape and migrated to Persia with the remaining segments of the Haydaran. By securing the support of Ibrahim Han and Paşa Han, he contested for the leadership of the entire Haydaran Confederation, but Haydar Agha had already become chief of the tribe with the support of tribal elites and Persian authorities. Sultan Agha was then sent to live in the fortress of Khoy where he died. Mirza Taki added that İbrahim Han and Paşa Han had fled into Ottoman territory with a small band in the early 1840s when they were ascending to their summer pastures, but the majority of the tribe remained in Persia. After giving this detailed account of the Haydaran, Mirza Taki emphasized that the members of the tribe were Persian subjects who had served in the army of the shah and fought several battles in Kerman and Yazd.[527]

According to Mirza Taki, the Celali was not divided into three but into two. He argued that their winter quarters were located around Akgöl Lake and along the Karasu River. In groups ranging in number from five to a hundred tents, they usually migrated towards Bayezid for pasturing. According to Mirza Taki, their migration into Ottoman territory in 1834 was because of fear of Cihangir Mirza. As British, Russian, and Ottoman officials would well remember, he stated, the Celalis plundered a large Persian caravan. As a result, the governor of Erzurum, Esad Pasha, held these tribes in Ottoman territory to confiscate the plundered commodities. However, once the restitution of the plundered items was complete, they were released to Persian custody. Thus, according to Mirza Taki, Celalis who remained in Ottoman territory were clearly Persian "fugitives."[528]

Mirza Taki Khan emphasized the Zilan tribe, which was most important because of its strength and the notoriety of its leaders. Mirza Taki Khan claimed that

[527] Aykun, "Erzurum Konferans (1843-1847) ve Osmanlı-Iran Hudut Antlaşması," 160.
[528] Aykun, "Erzurum Konferans (1843-1847) ve Osmanlı-Iran Hudut Antlaşması," 161.

despite their occasional migration into Ottoman territory, the Zilan had never really been Ottoman subjects. Even in those cases, Ottoman officials considered them to be Persian "fugitives" and returned them to Persian authorities. The Zilan and Cunukî, like the Celali, were held by Esad Pasha during the recovery of the commodities of Persian merchants that had been plundered in 1834. When the recovery was at an end, they again migrated to Persia. Their contemporary presence in Ottoman territory was because of the provocation of Hamid Bey, a lieutenant of the Ottoman army, who had invited the Zilan to inhabit Ottoman territory.[529]

Both Ottoman and Persian authorities invented their own histories for the tribes that they claimed as subjects. Citing a variety of sources and local informants, the Ottomans insisted that almost all of these tribes once lived in the region of Diyarbekir but had migrated to the northeastern frontiers of the empire in time. Persian authorities had their own narratives and cited the military service of these nomads in the Persian army in various battles in Kerman, Yazd, Khorasan, and Herat, as well as the settlements used by these Kurdish tribes in winter. Both the Persian and Ottoman narratives were true, as these tribes lived in a contested borderland and had established powerful relations with both Ottoman and Persian authorities. There was sufficient evidence for both to claim the subjecthood of these tribes.

In 1845, as Ottoman and Persian delegates were holding these meetings in Erzurum, the province of Erzurum was finally brought under the Tanzimat program. The Supreme Council (*Meclis-i Vâlâ*)[530] prepared a long directive (*talimatnâme*) to be applied by the new governor, Bekir Sami Pasha. After listing several sensitive

[529] Aykun, "Erzurum Konferans (1843-1847) ve Osmanlı-Iran Hudut Antlaşması," 244.
[530] Founded in 1838, the Supreme Council functioned as a critical institution supervising the reforms of the Tanzimat era. For more information, see Seyitdanlıoğlu, *Tanzimat Devrinde Meclis-i Valâ (1838-1868)*.

subjects in the province, it explained how tribal matters in the province should be handled.

> The population of the said province is substantially composed of Kurds and tribes, and their dissident characters are all along clear and known by everyone. By all manner of means and at all times, what is wished and required by the imperial state is the welfare and peace of the commoners together with the issue of the enlivening of imperial property. The necessary policy towards such tribal groups would be to call and bring them into submission and, as a requirement of the order of the country, to reprimand and threaten them. However, even such a policy will disturb the peace, and so the governor has the wisdom and ability to carry out the necessary steps to provide for the peace and welfare of the commoners and to control said tribes in any way and to cause them to submit to the imperial capital by preventing their inclination to the other side [the Persian Empire]. In other words, as these tribes were nomadic and most of them roamed the mountains or here and there, and as they are ignorant and cannot differentiate goodness and evil, it is possible that the Iranians could trick and seduce them. Thus, it is necessary to strive to prevent such tricks and seduction and not give any ground to said tribes to follow the Iranians…[531]

The instruction of the Supreme Council provides important clues about the tribal policy of the Ottoman Empire during the late 1840s and 1850s. According to the Supreme Council, borderland tribes lived in nomadism and could not separate good from the evil. Because of these peculiarities, they could be easily manipulated by the Persians. Thus, the governor of the province of Erzurum should pay a special attention to secure the loyalty of the tribes to the Ottoman Empire while at the same time protect Ottoman peasants from attacks by tribal groups.

The Conference of Erzurum lasted until 1847, but it did not resolve the disputes over the tribes between the Ottoman and Persian Empires. It certainly did not finalize the issue of the subjecthood of the borderland tribes. When the meetings in Erzurum came to an end, the Ottoman and Persian empires signed the second Treaty of Erzurum in 1847 at a time when the rule of the Kurdish dynasties had almost came to an end. Both sides agreed to form a survey commission to demarcate

[531] Küçük, "Tanzimat Devrinde Erzurum," 215. The English translation is mine.

the Ottoman-Persian border and determine the subjecthood of the borderland tribes. Article 8 stated that:

> Contested tribes the suzerainty over which is not known shall be left free by the two High Contracting Powers to choose once for all and specify the localities which they will henceforward always inhabit. Tribes the suzerainty over which is known shall be compelled to come within the territory of the State to which they belong."[532]

The Erzurum Treaty, despite not ending the dispute over the subjecthood of the tribes, gave the borderland tribes the opportunity to choose their own subjecthood. The next chapter focuses on how Ottoman authorities tried to win over the loyalty of the borderland tribes, and how tribes bargained their subjecthood with imperial states.

[532] Abdulghani, *Iraq and Iran*, 109

CHAPTER 5

NEGOTIATING SUBJECTHOOD:

TRIBES AND STATES AT A CONTESTED BORDERLAND

> Your humble servant was originally an inhabitant of Diarbekir…. But in the process of time, by reason of dearth and scarcity visiting those parts, we were afflicted with much difficulty in procuring subsistence, and were thus obliged, in order to support ourselves, to abandon our estates and possessions, and we turned our tents in the direction of Bayezid and Kars, on the eastern frontier of the Empire…. After inhabiting these for a long while, a great number of Kurdish and Parthian tribes were gathered under my authority; and in the hope of procuring the comfort and well-being and subsistence of the whole, it was deemed advisable to pass into the neighborhood of Revan, as being a spacious country, and one where rigours of the winter season are not so much felt. I therefore pointed out to a portion of those under my authority places for themselves near Kars and Bayezid and taking another portion with me, set out in the direction of Revan; and although we wandered up and down in those parts for some time, still not deeming it to our advantage to forsake the tranquility with which the poorer subjects of the Empire are blessed, we sometimes and for a long season, returned and inhabited between Mush and Bayezid. But afterwards, when the Russians invaded the eastern parts of the Empire, the prosperity of those parts was destroyed, and the fact of there being no need of ceremony between the two high and mighty states of Turkey and Persia tempted us to go as sojourners and strangers, and establish our tents in the direction of Koi, and was the immediate cause of our reposing there for a short time; after which by reason that from generation to generation we had had the honour of being fed with the crumbs of His Majesty the Sultan and of holding estates and possessions, we returned to our original country towards Kars, where we still reside.[533]

This quotation from the testimony of Hüseyin Agha, the chief of the Zilan Confederation, was submitted to the governor of Erzurum in May 1843. The text was written to prove the Ottoman subjecthood of the Zilan, and during the Erzurum Conference (1843-1847), Ottoman representatives used it as a resource to prove the Ottoman subjecthood of the tribe. Despite having been written to serve a particular

[533] Foreign Office 424/7B, Representation of Hussein Pasha, Chief of the Kurdish Tribe of Zeelaun, the Governor General of Erzeroum, May 1843, 123.

political purpose and containing factual errors,[534] it is a firsthand account of a tribal leader narrating how a nomadic pastoral tribe had adapted itself to a variety of environmental and political difficulties over centuries. Hüseyin Agha states how famine, which afflicted the Upper Tigris River basin, forced his tribe to migrate northward to the districts of Kars and Bayezid.[535] After some time in these regions, his tribe decided to migrate to Revan, as the winters there were milder than in Kars and Bayezid. When Revan was occupied by Russian Empire in 1827, they had to migrate again to the Ottoman territories of Muş and Bayezid, and the Russian occupation of eastern parts of the Ottoman Empire during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1829 forced them to migrate once again to Persian Khoy, as the war devastated the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire.

During the conferences held in Erzurum in between 1843-1847, tribesmen of the northern stretches of the Ottoman-Persian border presented such testimonies to conference participants. Through such testimonies, the tribes not only participated in the border-making process but chose the subjecthood of the empires to which they were willing to belong. The conferences were finalized by the Treaty of Erzurum signed in 1847. The treaty ended neither disputes over the subjecthood of the nomads nor over the border, yet it opened a path for the formation of new alliances and loyalties among tribes of the borderland. The treaty left the decision about the subjecthood of the tribes to them for once.

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[534] The reason of the migration of the Zilan from Revan was not explained in the letter. Until the Russian occuptation of Revan, the Zilan was living under the domain of the Khan of Revan, Hussein Quli Khan. Indeed, Hussein Agha did not present any clues about his good relations with the Khan of Revan, his alliance with the Persian Empire in the the Ottoman-Persian War of 1821-1823 and his conflicts with the governors of Kars and Bayezid before 1827. Clearly such an information would not serve to his benefit during the Erzurum Conference, as it was a clear sign for his Persian subjecthood.
[535] In here, Hussein Agha refers to the late sixteenth century, when several Turcoman and Kurdish tribes left Upper Tigris basin and migrated to the Central and Western Anatolia as well as to the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire.

By focusing on the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran tribes located on the Ottoman-Persian and Ottoman-Russian borders, this chapter analyzes the strategies adopted by the central and provincial authorities of the Ottoman Empire to bring the nomads under state control, encourage them to accept Ottoman subjecthood, and to turn them into sedentary cultivators. Depending on the peculiarities of a given nomadic tribe and the respective landscape that they occupied, Ottoman authorities applied a variety of strategies. The appointment, financial inducement, or exile of powerful tribal chiefs, fostering rivalries among different factions of a tribe, intervening in the pastoral ecology, and exempting tribal members from taxation and conscription for limited periods of time were the most widespread methods applied by Ottoman authorities to deal with borderland tribes.

The tribes, however, were not entirely subjugated by imperial powers. Given their thousands of families and livestock, they were able to negotiate the terms of their subjecthood, the taxes to be paid, and the number of men to be given in service of the army. Moreover, claims by borderland tribesmen were extremely important for the imperial capitals during the demarcation of the Ottoman-Persian border. Since the lands contested by the Ottoman and Persian empires were primarily the winter quarters and summer pastures of these nomads, the loyalty of these tribes was vitally important in the claim to such disputed territory. Such mutual dependence resulted in accommodative policies towards tribal populations on the part of imperial powers, and it made the attempts of the Ottoman Empire to centralize and modernize imperial state structure much more complex in this region. The three cases present a detailed account of evolving state-tribe relationships in the age of Ottoman modernization and centralization along its northeastern frontier.

5.1 The case of the Zilan

In 1847, Hüseyin Agha and his son Kör Ahmed Agha of the Zilan resided in Kağızman in the Ottoman Empire. His eldest son, Kasım Agha, together with his wife, were hostages of the Qajar authorities in Tehran.[536] As a means of keeping tribal groups under state control, the hostage system had a long-standing history in Persia and was widely practiced even in the nineteenth century.[537] Persian and Ottoman authorities were holding meetings and conducting surveys to determine the subjecthood of the borderland tribes, and both imperial powers wanted to keep disputed nomadic tribes within their own borders. On the Persian side, one way of achieving this was to hold influential tribal chiefs and their families hostage in the empire's capital cities. By holding Kasım Agha and his family hostage in Tehran, Qajar authorities intended to keep the Zilan nomads in Persian territory and to strengthen their claim to this tribal population during the surveys and negotiations to determine the subjecthood of the disputed tribes. On the Ottoman side, no such hostage system was in place in this period for this region. Rather than a hostage system, Ottoman authorities adopted a more flexible policy to keep the tribes within their borders.

When Hüseyin Agha, the chief of the Zilan Confederation, died in Kağızman in February 1848, three powerful heirs vided for the leadership of the fragmented tribal population on the Ottoman side: his two sons, Kasım Agha and Kör Ahmed Agha, and his nephew, Cafer Agha. Divided not only by the borders of three imperial

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[536] BOA, I.MVL 121/3044, 9 R 64 (March 15, 1848). See also Mehmed Hurşid, *Seyâhatnâme-ı Hudud*, 265.

[537] Beck, "Tribes and the State in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Iran," 204. Hostage policy was also widely practiced during the early Qajar Period, when Fath Ali Shah tried to subordinate discontent tribal groups and establish control over Persian territories. See Hambly, "Agha Muhammed Khan and the Establishment of the Qajar Dynasty," 137. For the tribal chiefs and notables of the Ottoman – Persian border, see Dinç, "Osmanlı-Iran Sınır Boyunda Sadakat Sağlama Biçimi Olarak Rehine Siyaseti," 97-134.

powers, the Zilan experienced fierce competition among the leaders of its different sections. As the following lines clarify, Ottoman, Qajar, and Russian authorities applied various strategies to win the loyalty of these chiefs wandering the intersection of Ottoman, Qajar, and Russian lands with their camps of hundreds of tents. Tribal chiefs, however, did not receive the imposed policies passively; they sought to benefit from the rivalry among these empires and assert their leadership over the confederation by engaging in different alliances and relations with various circles in the three empires.

On 12 February 1848, two days after the death of Hüseyin Agha, the tribal leaders and elders of the Zilan and its sub-divisions (*tâife*), the Cemaldinî, Cunukî, and Kaskî, who were in the Ottoman sanjak of Kars filed a collective petition to the kaymakam of Kars, Sırrı Pasha, expressing their confidence and faith in Ahmed Agha. They pointed to him as the rightful heir of the entire Zilan Confederation.[538] On the same day, Ahmed Ağa also submitted a petition to Sırrı Pasha in which he emphasized his loyalty to the Ottoman Empire and his expectation of being favored by the sultan.[539] Despite the willingness to become chief of the tribe expressed in his petition and tribal support, Ottoman authorities of Kars and Erzurum were not content and accused him of being under the influence of his elder brother, Kasım Agha, who had consistently been inclined toward Persia.

According to Ottoman frontier authorities, because of the cruelty and oppression of the ruling family (Zilanoğulları), growing discontent was taking place among the subdivisions of the Zilan Confederation. They argued that the reason behind the desire to appoint Ahmed Agha as chief was that the tribal people could

[538] BOA, I.MVL 121/3044, 7 Ra 64 (February 12, 1848) "*Bu tarafda kaffe aşâir gerek Zilan ve Cunuki ve Cemadanlı bi'l-cümlemiz ale't ittifak yek dil ve yek cihhet olarak merhûm mağfurin mahdumu Ahmed Aga kullarında inkiyâd-ı külliyemiz derkâr olunarak.*"
[539] BOA, I.MVL 121/3044, 7 Ra 64 (February 12, 1848).

not differentiate good from evil.[540] As a temporary solution, the governor of Erzurum, Hamdi Pasha, and the provincial treasurer, Mehmed Efendi, proposed the practice of mollifying and rewarding the tribal leaders of the Zilan to keep their families within the boundaries of the empire until Ottoman and Persian authorities reached a conclusion regarding the subjecthood of the tribe. As a permanent solution for the long run, they proposed that once the sedentarization of the Zilan nomads in the Ottoman Empire came to fruition, tribal chiefs inclined toward Persia could be isolated and then exiled to distant provinces.[541] After being discussed in the Meclis-i Ahkâm-ı Adliye, Hamdi Pasha and Mehmed Efendi's proposal was found reasonable by the Sublime Port. It was believed that because the subjecthood of the Zilan was disputed between the Ottoman and Persian Empires, the Persians were trying to deceive the tribal chiefs with decorations and rewards. For the time being, the provincial authorities of Kars and Erzurum were given the way to incentivize the tribal chiefs, as well.[542]

Qajar authorities adopted a similar policy regarding the disputed tribes of the Ottoman-Qajar borderland. In early 1848, Qajar authorities released Kasım Agha from captivity and returned him from Tehran to Khoy, where the Persian section of the Zilan Confederation resided. He was honored and decorated by Persian authorities and advised to bring the remaining nomads of the Zilan from the Ottoman realm into Qajar territory.[543] In summer 1848, Kasım Agha contacted his brother

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[540] BOA, I.MVL 121/3044, 19 R 64 (March 25,1848) "*aşâir takımının dahi nik ve bedi fark ve temyizden zihinleri hali olduğundan babası müteveffa merkumun yerine merkum Ahmed Ağa mir-i aşiret nasb olunması emelinde oldukları*"

[541] BOA, I.MVL 121/3044, 19 R 64 (March 25, 1848) "*bir kıta nişân itasıyla imtiyâz verilerek bu sırada üslub-ı hükmiyane ile telifi teşvik ve bir tarafdan dahi aşâir-i merkume ahâlisi semt-i iskâna targib-i birle liva-yı mezkur dahilinde kain kazalardan mahal-i münasebeye bade'l iskân birkaç mah mürurunda merkum vesair familyasının aşâir-i merkumeden bi't tefrik mahal-i baideye tard ve tebidi muvaffak-ı hal bulunmuş.*"

[542] BOA, I.MVL 121/3044, 19 R 64 (March 25, 1848).

[543] Mehmed Hurşid, *Seyâhatnâme-ı Hudud*, 265.

Ahmed Agha and convinced him to migrate to Persia.[544] When Ahmed Agha then migrated upon his brother's request, he was only able to do so with five to ten families of close relatives. The remaining six hundred families, most of whom belonged to the Cunukî, Cemaldinî and the Kaskî sections of the Zilan Confederation, continued to roam in the environs of Kars and Bayezid. Ottoman authorities argued that these tribal populations were complaining about the oppression and cruelty of the ruling family, which is why they did not follow Ahmed Agha.[545] From the perspective of the tribal elders, on the other hand, Ahmed Agha was loyal to the Ottoman sultan but had been deceived by his elder brother, Kasım Agha.

In 1848, following Ahmed Agha's migration to Persia, the chiefs of the remaining sections of the Zilan Confederation in Ottoman territory submitted a contract to the kaymakam of Kars demanding that Cafer Agha (the cousin of Kasım and Ahmed Aghas) be appointed as the director of the confederation in the Ottoman Empire. In the same contract, tribal elders promised their families would settle and rebuild the ruined, deserted villages of Kars where they would engage in agriculture and protect order.[546] Upon receiving this petition, Ottoman authorities considered the difficulty of controlling the mobile population and appointed Cafer Agha as the director of the Zilan.

Appointing an outsider as director of the Zilan nomads was out of the question. The governor of Erzurum, Hamdi Pasha, and provincial treasurer, Mehmed Habib, argued that the outcomes of imposing a foreign chief on the tribe would be

[544] BOA, I.MVL 131/3502, 21 ZA 64 (October 19, 1848).
[545] BOA, A.MKT 168/63 and BOA, I.MVL 121/3044.
[546] BOA, A.MKT 168/63, 19 Z 64 (November 16, 1848) "*aşâirimizin muteberanından Resul Ağazade Cafer Ağa kulları her vechle sadık kullarından aşâir ve aşiret halkı kendüsünden razı olduğundan mumaileyh Cafer Ağa kullarının müdür nasb olunmasına müsâde buyurulması*"

troublesome since tribal elders (*aksakallı*, *ihtiyâr*) would refuse a foreign authority. The use of physical force (*kuvve-i cebriye*) to subdue or exile disobedient tribal elites would also not be satisfactory; as the region was close to the Persian border, tribal families would flee to the other side.[547] Indeed, their arguments indicate that tribal notables and headmen had great influence in the process of electing their chief as well as over the tribal population. Ottoman authorities needed to take this into consideration in the integration of nomadic tribes into the newly established political and administrative structure.

Because both imperial states were trying to win the loyalty of nomads whose subjecthood was in dispute, physical coercion was out of the question. Both Ottoman and Qajar authorities had to prioritize coopting tribal chiefs through official appointments, decorations, rewards, and immunity from taxation and conscription. If these failed to win their loyalty, the imperial capitals benefited from rivalries within the tribal structure and played them off one another. Indeed, imperial strategies to keep the frontier tribes under control and increase state intervention in tribal affairs – along with the difficulty of accessing traditional winter quarters and summer pastures – deteriorated not only the well-being and organization of the confederation as a whole, but weakened the authority of the chiefs over tribal populations and led to the emergence of new leaders. Tapper argues that a chief's power and authority over a tribal population was based on a variety of factors. "He collects tax and military levies, and maintains order for the government, while for his followers he conducts external political relations, adjudicates disputes, and (for nomads) allocates pastures, and coordinates migrations."[548] Starting in 1830 at the latest, the Zilan Confederation

[547] BOA, A.MKT 168/63, 19 Z 64 (November 16, 1848) "*bunlara haricden ve açıkdan müdir nasb ve tayin olunması içlerinden bazı ifa-yı mefsedete muktedir olanlar aşiret-i merkumeyi iğfal ve tahrikden gerü turmayacaklarına*"
[548] Tapper, "Introduction," 56.

was migrating from one imperial state to another, forced to repeatedly engage in new alliances and resist or adapt to changing political circumstances to survive along the disputed border. These developments disrupted their migration patterns and means of survival, which contributed to rivalries among the factions of the tribe in the long run and led to the emergence new tribal leaders who assumed power.

In late 1848, having appointed Cafer Agha as chief, the provincial governors of the Ottoman Empire reorganized the structure of the Zilan Confederation in accordance with new administrative reforms being put into practice during the Tanzimat period. Their aim was to incorporate tribal structures into the existing administrative hierarchy, render the tribal population more accessible, and keep them under control. First, the traditional tribal chieftainship (*aşiret ağalığı*) was abrogated and an administratively independent tribal directorship (*aşiret müdürlüğü*) was formed in its place.[549] Cafer Agha, the cousin and rival of Ahmed and Kasım Aghas, was granted a monthly salary of 2000 piasters when he became director (*müdir-i aşâir*) of the Zilan Confederation. Nebi Agha, the leader of the Cunukî section, was appointed as chief of the tribal council (*reis-i meclis-i aşâir*) and head of the *zabtiye* (rural police or gendarmes) to be formed among tribesmen. Sadullah Agha, a notable from the Cunukî, was appointed as the scribe of the tribal council (*katib-i meclis-i aşâir*).[550] As tribal elders and section headmen had great influence over the decision-making process of the tribe, ten were appointed as members (*aza*) of the newly formed tribal council.[551]

Ottoman authorities also prepared two decrees (*buyruldu*) to be read before the tribal population. The first was written to the chief of the Cunukî tribe, Nebi Ağa,

[549] BOA, A}MKT 168/63, 21 Z 64 (November 18, 1848).
[550] BOA, I.MVL 148/4171, 19 Ca 65 (February 12, 1849).
[551] BOA, MVL 31/45, 1265 (1849).

who would then not only the chief of the council of the Zilan but also the head of the zabtiye forces. In this decree, Nebi Ağa was delegated with responsibility for the implementation of the "auspicious" Tanzimat in the tribal landscape, the sedentarization of the nomads, their engagement in cultivation, and the maintenance of the security.[552] The second decree was written directly to the directorate of the Zilan. It announced the abrogation of tribal chieftainship, which was described as a source of oppression over the tribal population. The document stated that the tribal population living under a chief have been vulnerable to several kinds of cruelty including involuntary migration across borders. The formation of a new tribal directorship and the acceptance of sedentarization and engagement in agriculture, on the other hand, would enable the tribal population attain a level of welfare and safety.[553]

The tribal structure of the Zilan was reorganized in imitation of the hierarchical administrative structure of the provincial administration brought about by the Tanzimat reforms.[554] As the petitions written by tribal members confirm, the formation of the tribal directorate was not a top down imposition; rather, it was the outcome of negotiations and interactions between rising tribal elites and the local governors of Kars, Bayezid, and Erzurum. Indeed, Cafer Agha, a rival to Kasım Agha within the tribal structure, benefitted from the new political environment. In another letter to the imperial state, the newly formed tribal directorate agreed to settle the tribe in villages assigned to them in the districts of Kars and Kağızman and to act in accordance with the new order, the auspicious Tanzimat, against which Kasım

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[552] BOA, A.MKT 168/63, "t*anzimat-ı hayriyenin … tatbik ve ziraat ve hirasetin ikmaline teşvikât-i lazıme*"
[553] BOA, A.MKT 168/63, "*iskân ettirülub yerleşdirilmiş olan hanelerden maada yerleşmeyen hanelerin dahi paşa-yı mumaileyh maarifeti ve maarifetiniz ile münasib ve matlub olunan mahallere yerler gösterilerek emr-i iskanlarının hüsn-i icrasıyla"*
[554] Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Sürecinde Türkiye Ülke Yönetimi*, 173-207.

Agha had resisted (See Figure 4 for the map of the wintering spaces of tribes in Kars).[555]

In late March 1850, the new kaymakam of Kars, Osman Nuri Pasha argued that despite the assurances of the tribal directorate of the Zilan, none of the families had adopted a settled, agricultural way of life. Instead, the members of the Zilan had expelled the inhabitants of several villages of the district of Kağızman the previous winter and used the villages as their winter quarters. Moreover, they forcibly settled their families as guests in surrounding villages and seized straw, forage, and livestock.[556] According to Osman Nuri Pasha, the chiefs of the confederation who were preventing the sedentarization of the Zilan nomads needed to be exiled from the Persian border, and the remaining nomads needed to be divided into small groups and settled in different villages, as had been done in the case of the Rişvan tribe in Kayseri and Sivas. Otherwise, he added, the damage caused by tribal members to settled communities and their border-violating migrations could not be stopped.[557]

In 1850, when Kasım Agha of the Zilan decided to return to Ottoman Bayezid and Kars along with three hundred tents of nomads, Ottoman authorities in Kars and Erzurum faced a much more complicated issue. According to Ottoman officials, the reason for his migration was the scarcity of winter quarters in Persia. Because Kasım Ağa had not been successful in bringing sufficient numbers of Zilan families back from Ottoman territories, winter quarters that had been reserved for the Zilan nomads in Persia had been given to a camp of six hundred tents of the

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[555] BOA, MVL 31/45, 19 S 65 (January 14, 1849).
[556] BOA, MVL 232/53, 17 Ca 1266, (March 31, 1850) "*Kağızman kazası köylerinde kendülere münasib köylerin hanelerini cebren zabt ve biçare köylülerin çoluk çocuklarını kış günü taşra ederek ve hol ve saman ve (...) dahi ahz ve gasb etikleri ve civarda bulunan köylere ve köylülere misafir çekdirmek ve yem ve yiyecek ve şunun bunun öküzünü ve devab-ı sairelerini alub gasb etmek gibi envai fazâhata cesaretle bundan evvel pek çok vukuu bulmuş*"
[557] BOA, MVL 232/53, 1266 (1850) For the sedentarization of the Rişvan tribe, see Köksal, "Coercion and Mediation: Centralization and Sedentarization."; Söylemez, *Osmanlı Devletinde Aşiret Yönetimi*; Dede, "From Nomadism to Sedentary Life in Central Anatolia."

Haydaran tribe. Ottoman frontier authorities believed that Kasım Agha would again attempt to "deceive" Zilan families who had accepted Ottoman subjecthood and been integrated into the Ottoman administrative structure and try to convince them to migrate to Persian territory. Meanwhile, the Persian envoy in Erzurum demanded these Zilan nomads be returned insisting that they were subjects of the Persian Empire.[558]

Hamdi and Osman pashas were in favor of exiling chiefs who were inclined toward Persian subjecthood, and they advised dividing the tribal population into small groups and allocating them among different villages so that they would not be strong enough to overpower the settled populations – as was done for the Rişvan tribe of Sivas. Instead of appointing Kasım Ağa as chief of the tribe, they favored keeping the newly-formed tribal directorate, whose chiefs had already agreed to sedentarization and engagement in agriculture, intact. However, the imperial capital preferred a more flexible policy towards tribal chiefs. Kars, being close to Russian border, was not comparable to Sivas. As discussed in previous chapters, the tribal populations always had the option of migrating to the other side of the border, whether to the Russian or Persian Empire. Since the subjecthood of the tribe was disputed, exiling tribal chiefs could lead to the emergence of an inter-imperial crisis with the Persian Empire. Thus, the imperial capital proposed a more accommodating policy vis-à-vis the tribal chiefs of the Zilan. Instead of coercing them, the imperial center favored decorating and rewarding (*taltifât*) the chiefs.[559]

The proposal of the imperial capital notwithstanding, in early September 1850 Hamdi Pasha ordered the arrest of the tribal chiefs of the Zilan including Kasım Agha, Köse Süleyman, and his son Ahmed Agha, on the accusation that they were

[558] BOA, HR.MKT 29/63, 5 RA 1266 (January 19, 1850).
[559] BOA, MVL 232/53, 1266 (1850).

provoking nomads to migrate to Persia. They were sent first to Erzurum and then exiled to the imperial capital.[560] The organization of the tribal directorate was also reshaped by the governor of Erzurum. This time, Ahmed Agha, the brother of Kasım Agha, was appointed as chief of the Zilan and Cafer Agha, the former chief, became the kethüda (chamberlain) of the tribe.[561]

The governor of Erzurum, who clearly preferred any alternative to Kasım Agha, believed that the exile of the chiefs would bring stability to the region. However, the arrests created upheaval among the tribal population of the region. Not content with developments on the Ottoman side, a hundred tents of the Zilan immediately crossed to the Russian side of the border and more tents were on their way to either Russian and Persian territory.[562] The arrest of Kasım Agha also created fear among other tribes whose subjecthood was disputed. For instance, one of the chiefs of the Haydaran, İbrahim Agha, who had intended to cross into the Ottoman Empire with three hundred tents, turned back to Persia when he heard the news about the arrest of the chiefs of the Zilan.[563]

As the Zilan nomads considered migrating to the Persian and Russian sides of the border, Ismail Pasha, the Minister of Commerce, happened to be on a mission in Erzurum. Upon hearing of their intentions, he organized an immediate visit to the camps of the tribe in the Bayezid district. During the visit, the elders of the Zilan tribe expressed fear due to the arrest of their chiefs.[564] Tribal chiefs and the mother of Kasım Agha emphasized that Kasım Agha had migrated from Persia to Ottoman territory with three hundred tents voluntarily, which was a sign of his loyalty to the

[560] BOA, HR.SYS 80/22, 29 L 66 (September 7, 1850).
[561] BOA, HR.SYS 80/22, 5 ZA 66 (September 12, 1850).
[562] BOA, HR.SYS 80/22, 17 ZA 1266 (September 24, 1850).
[563] BOA, HR.SYS 80/22, 19 Z 66 (September 26, 1850).
[564] BOA, HR.SYS 80/22, 19 Z 66 (September 26, 1850).

Ottoman Empire. They articulated their regret that he had been imprisoned by local governors despite his loyalty and innocence. Ismail Pasha clearly favored the release of the tribal chiefs of the Zilan. He argued that Kasım Agha was greatly respected among the tribes of the region, and if he were not released, tribal populations would migrate to Russia or Persia and tribes currently living on the Persian side of the border would reject Ottoman subjecthood for fear of possible arrest.

After the visit of Ismail Pasha, the kaymakam of Bayezid, Feyzullah Efendi, together with the tribal chiefs of the Zilan, Celali, Haydaran, Ademanlı, and Hasanlu wrote to the imperial state. They emphasized that Kasım Agha had committed no crime and that his arrest created great disquiet (*vahşet*) among the tribes of the region. They also reported that while they had indeed intended to migrate with their tribes to the Persian or Russian sides of the border, the guarantees, promises, and decorations offered by Ismail Pasha had made them reconsider.[565] Unsurprisingly, none of the chiefs of the Zilan tribal directorate like Cafer Agha and Nebi Agha signed the document. The signatories were mostly relatives of Kasım Agha and chiefs of tribes whose subjecthood was contested. Obviously, the policy of exile created anxiety among the borderland nomads, especially among chiefs.

After a series of correspondence, it was decided to release Kasım Agha and other tribal notables who were close to him in order to keep the nomadic tribes in the borders of the Ottoman Empire. The imperial capital also stated that tribes willing to migrate from the Persian to the Ottoman side should be treated well.[566] Once again, the Ottomans recognized the authority of the tribal chiefs. To please the ruling family, it was decided to provide monthly salaries to tribal elites. The mother of

[565] BOA, HR.SYS 80/22, 19 Z 66 (September 26, 1850).
[566] BOA, İ.HR 61/2959, 6 RA 1266 (January 20, 1850) "*İranludan berüye müracaat eden adamların muamelat-ı lütfiye ile bir kat daha celb-i kulubleri*"

Kasım Agha was granted a 500 piasters monthly salary, his brother Ahmed Agha 500 piasters, and his two other brothers, Şemdin and Abdi Aghas, 250 piasters each.[567] In 1852, Kasım Agha himself was appointed as the director (*mudir*) of the entire Zilan tribe with a monthly salary of 2000 piasters.[568] The tribe was treated as an independent administrative unit even though the imperial center and local governors had not yet reached a conclusion regarding its official organization. In 1853, the governor of Erzurum proposed to appoint a scribe and enough zabtiyes to properly govern the tribe. To compensate for the salaries of the appointees, he proposed increasing the taxes on the tribe from twenty-seven to fifty thousand piasters.[569] By the end of this process, Kasım Agha secured his power as chief of the Zilan. He received a 1500 piasters monthly salary, and an amount of 2000 piasters was reserved for the zabtiye forces assigned to the tribe.[570]

[567] BOA, A.MKT.UM 59/97, 18 B 1267 (May 19, 1851).
[568] BOA, MVL 331/105, 24.Ş.1268 (June 13, 1852).
[569] BOA, MVL 263/84, 21 Z 69 2 (September 23, 1853).
[570] BOA, I.MVL 203/10366, 12 Recep 79 (January 3, 1863).

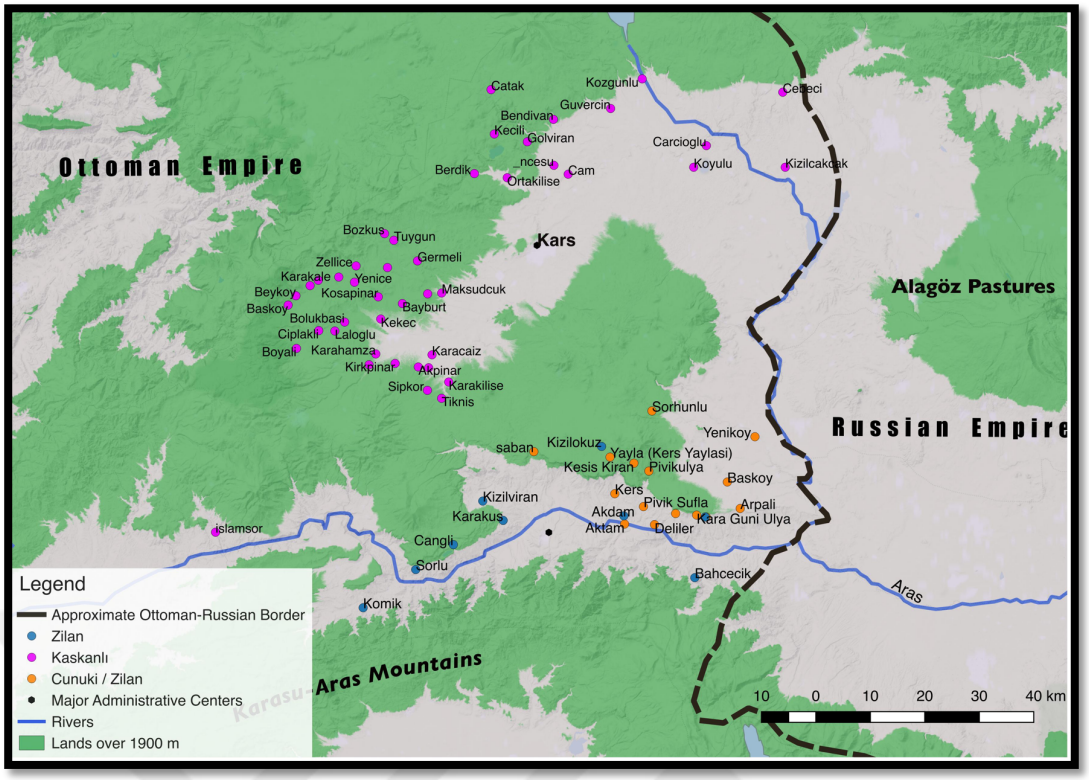

Figure 4. Wintering villages of tribes in Kars in the late 1840s and 1850s
Source: [Made with QGIS and based on BOA, I.MVL 121/3044, (1848); BOA, 168/63, (1848); BOA, I.MVL 131/3502, (1848), Some of the villages could not be located]

5.2 The Crimean War (1853-1856) and frontier tribes

While Ottoman authorities dealt with the settlement of borderland nomads on its northeastern frontiers, tensions with the Russians were again aggravated. The Crimean War once again revealed the interest of imperial powers in winning the support of borderland nomads. The Ottoman and Russian Empires met in the Lesser Caucasus, and a battle on this front was inevitable. As in the Russo-Ottoman War of 1829, Ottoman and Russian authorities realized that if borderland nomads were treated well and integrated into their respective imperial structures, they could provide an important resource in terms of cavalrymen to their respective armies.

During the early phases of the war, the Zilan tribe was divided between the Ottoman and Russian Empires. For nomadic tribes of the borderland, the war

entailed migration, a loss of animal stock, and military recruitment since they were the first to encounter approaching enemy or allied armies. The borderland tribes had no powerful ideological commitment to any imperial power, and during the course of the war, the Zilan, Cemaldini, and Cunukî tribes tried to minimize their losses in terms of manpower and wealth by playing both sides, just as they did during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1829. This was a survival strategy of borderland tribes whose material interests depended on maintaining relations on both sides.

The chiefs of the Zilan, Ahmed and Kasım Aghas, maintained their neutrality to a great extent, promised loyalty and support to both sides, and played the two empires against one another. The Zilan and other borderland tribes also redefined their alliances and loyalties according to the course of the war. Averyanov states that during the battle of Başgedikler in 1853, in the early phases of the war, four to five thousands Kurdish cavalrymen served in the Ottoman army, including the Cemaldini, Beziki, and Milan which were subdivisions of the Zilan Confederation. However, the repeated defeat of the Ottoman army led the borderland tribes to redefine their position.[571] In December 1853, the chiefs of the Zilan, Beziki, Milan, and Cemaldini visited Gümrü (Alexandrapol) where they expressed loyalty and support for Russian military officials. Kasım and Ahmed Aghas, two powerful chiefs of the Zilan, also expressed their loyalty and desire to support the Russian Empire in several letters submitted to Russian commanders. At the beginning of the war, Russian authorities had charged Colonel Loris Melikov with managing and organizing Kurdish tribes. His primary agenda was to obtain their support or at least maintain their neutrality during the war. To this end, he held several meetings with influential chiefs of the region. In November 1854, tribal chiefs and Russian military officials held a meeting

[571] Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, 86-88; Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War (1853-1856)*, 365-366.

in Kızılkilise, a village in the district of Şuragel of the sanjak of Kars. During the meeting, Russian authorities expressed their gratitude to Kasım Agha for his loyalty and support for the Russian Empire, for protecting and maintaining the security of the Russian borderland, and for preventing depredation and plundering on the part of the tribes. In a similar vein, Kasım Agha promised his loyalty and support for Russian authorities along with that of all the Kurds under his command. He guaranteed that at least 800 to 1000 cavalrymen would be furnished to the Russian army whenever necessary. Finally, he promised to protect the security of the region from plunder or attack from any side, including along the road that connected Alexandrapol and Kulya.

In return, Russian authorities promised to first grant him the title of colonel in the Russian military. Second, as was the case for his father Huseyin Agha, the Russian Empire would recognize his authority, influence, and privileged status within his tribe. Third, he would be paid a salary for life. Moreover, in the case of an attack by the Ottomans, Russian officials promised to put sufficient soldiers under his command. Following this meeting, Kasım Agha, his family, and the leaders of the subsections of the Zilan Confederation received generous material support from Russian authorities.[572] In December 1854, Kasım Agha was appointed as a colonel by the Russian authorities[573] while he still bore the title of *dergah-ı ali kapucubaşısı* (imperial gate keeper) and *mudir* (director) of the Zilan tribe on the Ottoman side.[574]

As the war gradually came to an end, Kasım Agha weakened his ties with Russian authorities. Averyanov argues that this was because of rumors that the Russians were losing the war in Crimea.[575] During the last phase of the war, Kasım

[572] Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, 283-287.
[573] Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, 106.
[574] Badem, The Ottoman Crimean War (1853-1856), 366.
[575] Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, 107.

Agha visited the camps of the Russian army less frequently and established more ties with Ottoman authorities. Another member of the family, Cafer Agha, the cousin of Hüseyin Agha, maintained relations with Russian authorities until the end. Candan Badem states that he formed two cavalry regiments in the service of the Russian Army.[576] Ottoman sources also indicate that he fought on the side of the Russians.[577] At the end of the war, Cafer Agha remained chief of the Zilan nomads in the Russian Empire, while Kasım Agha remained chief of the Zilan nomads in the Ottoman Empire.

During the early phases of the war, Russian authorities also tried to make contact with the Haydaran Confederation. As discussed in the following part, large numbers of Haydaran nomads had been settled in the districts of Erciş, Adilcevaz, and Patnos districts upon their arrival from Persia. Although not as close to the Russian border as the Zilan, they also bore the brunt of the war. Contact between the Russians and the Haydaran tribe was carried out through Cafer Agha, the chief of the Zilan in the Russian Empire. In 1853, Cafer Agha wrote to Haydar Agha, the chief of the Haydaran, inviting him to join the Russian armies.[578] Haydar Agha refused and submitted the letter to Ottoman authorities as a sign of his loyalty to the Ottoman State. Averyanov states that the Haydaran tribe provided large numbers of cavalrymen to the Ottoman army during the early phases of the war and abstained from contact with Russian authorities,[579] which correspondence between the Ottoman imperial capital and provincial centers confirms. In a letter to the governor

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[576] Badem, The Ottoman Crimean War (1853-1856), 365.
[577] BOA, A.MKT.UM 205/94, 8 Z 71 (August 22, 1855).
[578] BOA, I.DH 324/21108, 1271 (1855) "*Bahar vakti serdarın hidmetine gitdikde bana emr etti ki Haydar Ağa senin akraba ve dostundur ve mabeyninizde ziyadesiyle muhabbet vardır, gelüb hidmet edecek olur ise Rusya kumandanları kendüsüne çok riayet ve muhabbet ederler ve hiç bir vakit emek? ve hidmeti Rusya devleti indinde zayi' olmaz*"
[579] Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, 101.

of Hakkari, it was argued that Haydar Agha, the chief of the Haydaran, should be awarded with a sword due to his deportment (*gösterdiği taahüde mebni*) during the war. Moreover, it was asserted that Kurdish chiefs (*rüesâ-yı ekrad*) who had declared their loyalty and support for the Ottoman Empire should also be given official titles and decorations.[580] In fact, Haydar Agha and other tribal chiefs had predicted that Russian occupation would not be permanent and feared Ottoman revenge in the event of Russian withdrawal. In the end, the Ottomans and its allies were victorious over the Russian Empire, and even after the Crimean War, the Ottomans tried to win the support of tribes who had sided with the Russians.[581]

Following the Crimean War, the Ottoman, Russian, French, and British empires formed a joint commission in order to delineate the border between the Ottoman and Russian Empires in the Lesser Caucasus. The commission was comprised of two Ottoman, two Russian, one French, and one British delegate. After visiting the border and holding meetings about land contested by the two empires, the commission reached a final conclusion on 5 December 1857.[582] The second phase was the physical demarcation of the border, which required the formation of yet another joint commission. In this commission, the Ottoman Empire was represented by Süleyman Efendi, the Russian Empire by Jean Frisky, and the British Empire by Edward R. James. During the demarcation of the boundary (*rekz-i alaim-i hudud*), local inhabitants were present in addition to the members of the commission. Each marker dividing the Ottoman and Russian border from Mount Ağrı to Kars was documented with the testimonies of witnesses who were mostly local inhabitants of villages near the border.[583]

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[580] BOA, A.MKT.MHM, 74/40, 7 Z 71 (August 21, 1855).
[581] BOA, HR.MKT 146/93, 9 Şaban 1872 (April 15, 1856).
[582] BOA, A.DVN.NMH 9/21, (1857).
[583] BOA, A.MKT. NZD 291/101, 1276 S 22 (September 20, 1859).

The demarcation of the border between the Ottoman and Russian Empires in the Lesser Caucasus was much easier and less contested than that of the Ottoman-Persian boundary. In the former, most of the discussion concerned the district of Köroğlu, a region in the sanjak of Kars that was ideal for both agricultural activity and the summer pastoralism of the Zilan and Cunukî nomads. Ottoman authorities were adamant that this tract of land remain within the Ottoman domain since it was an exemplary place for the sedentarization of nomads.[584] However, following a series of correspondence, the Ottomans grudgingly acquiesced the eastern half of the district to the Russian Empire. The demarcation commission also decided to give the inhabitants of nearby villages the right to remain in the domain of either the Russians or the Ottomans.[585]

On September 11, 1858, the demarcation commission arranged a meeting with the villagers of Hüseyinkend, Çarıklı, and Hacı Behram, which had been allocated to the Ottoman Empire. The commission asked their preference, and the villagers of Hüseyinkend and Çarıklı chose Ottoman subjecthood. Only one family, which was given time to sell its immovable property and migrate to Russia, chose Russian subjecthood.[586] The district was also used by tribes of the Zilan Confederation during summer. During the demarcation of the border, nearly one hundred and fifty houses of the Zilan and Cunukî tribes remained on the Russian side of the border. Ahmed Agha, one of the chiefs of the tribe, appealed to the borderland commission concerning the future of his tribe, asking whether they would remain on the Russian side or be settled in Ottoman territory.[587] Süleyman Efendi, the lieutenant representing the Ottomans on the demarcation commission, consulted the

[584] BOA, I.MMS 132/5656, (1857).
[585] BOA, HR.MKT 266/11, (1858).
[586] BOA, A.MKT.NZD 291/101, 1276 S 22 (September 20, 1859).
[587] BOA, HR.MKT 266/11, 27 Muharrem 75 (September 6, 1858).

imperial capital regarding the fate of these hundred and fifty tents of the Zilan that remained on the Russian side of the border. The imperial capital and provincial governors concluded that they had to be treated like the inhabitants of the villages of Hüseyinkend and Çarıklı – that is to say, their own decision regarding their subjecthood would be heeded.[588]

Following correspondence between Ottoman and Russian circles, it was decided that tribal chiefs would be consulted regarding the preference in a face-to-face meeting. Seventy-two households from the Zilan and Cunukî tribes had already crossed to the Ottoman side of the border, but seventy-eight remained in Russian territory. During the meeting with Russian and Ottoman authorities, seventy-two tribal households opted for Ottoman subjecthood while six remained Russian. As it was winter, those tribal households that chose Ottoman subjecthood were allowed to remain in their villages until spring.[589]

5.3 The case of the Celali

> As part of the Celali tribe whose subjecthood is disputed, a few years ago we settled in the sub-province of Bayezid in the lands of the Sublime State whose reign shall be everlasting. [However], two years ago, we were offended by Mehmed Bey, the son of the former administrator of the sub-province, Behlül Pasha, because of some matters, and we crossed into Iranian territory. Nevertheless, as the mercy and compassion of the imperial state towards all people and tribes under his protection is obvious and known to everyone, we want by our free will to defect to the Sublime State together sixty-eight tribal houses. Hereby submitting this report to the kaymakam of Bayezid, Feyzullah Efendi, as a contract, we present and declare that we are ready to work for the reconstruction and enlivening of the ruined villages in the sub-province of Bayezid, to pay our wintering taxes as other tribes do in time, and to pray day and night for the imperial state.[590]

[588] BOA, HR.SYS 1338/74, 1275, (1858).
[589] BOA, I.DH 429/28403, 3 S 1275 (September 12, 1858).
[590] BOA, I.HR 67/3277, 19 S 66 (January 4, 1850), See Appendix C for the Ottoman Turkish version of the text.

In 1850, almost one year after the exile of the local Kurdish dynasty that was ruling the sanjak of Bayezid, the chief of the Belhikanlı clan of the Celali tribe, Tozo Ağa, and several other tribal elders (*aksakallı*) on the Persian side of the border crossed into Ottoman territory and submitted the contract (*sened*) above to the new kaymakam of Bayezid, Feyzullah Efendi. In this contract, the Celalis related how they were compelled to migrate to the Persian side of the border two years earlier when they were hurt by Mehmed Bey, the son of Behlül Pasha, the previous Kaymakam of Bayezid. Since the local Kurdish dynasty was now expelled from the region, the Celalis were promising to settle in and enliven the ruined villages of Bayezid and to pay the taxes demanded of them on time. Similar contracts were also submitted to the authorities of Bayezid by Süleyman Ağa – the kethüda of the Celali tribe – and several other tribal elders.[591] Through this statement, the Celali nomads not only accepted Ottoman subjecthood but also agreed to settle in Tambat and Yarımkaya, two villages that were contested between the Ottoman and Persian Empires. After the arrival of Celalis, the kaimakam of Bayezid district, Mehmed Emin, requested that the imperial capital decorate the chiefs of the tribe to strengthen their loyalty to the Ottoman Empire since Persian authorities were also trying to win their loyalty.[592]

Since the Russian occupation of Revan in 1827, the region used by the Celali nomads had become a triplex confinium in which three imperial powers and a variety of local clans were in a constant competition and struggle for political domination and local resources. Most of the grazing lands and winter quarters that had been used by the Celali clans were disputed among the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires. The Celali clans and the natural environment that they exploited for their pastoral

[591] BOA, I.HR 67/3277, 19 S 66 (January 4, 1850).
[592] BOA, I.DH 445/29429, 29 Muharrem 76 (August 28, 1859).

economy were divided by the new boundaries of three imperial powers. From the perspective of the tribes, their subsistence economy depended on the maintenance of seasonal migrations between the grazing lands and winter quarters, which had been distributed among the territories of three empires. From the perspective of the imperial powers, however, the security and stability of the frontiers would be insured by a well-defined boundary, and the people inhabiting the territories were expected to be loyal to their respective imperial states. Otto Blau, the Prussian Consul in Trabzon, wrote in 1857 that the nomads of this geography were encapsulated by the Russian, Ottoman, and Persian imperial powers.[593] Along the same lines, chapter 3 discusses how such encapsulation disrupted the pastoral economy of the nomads and led to their further banditization.

One part of the Celali nomads wintered along both sides of the Karasu River. Another wintered around Lake Akgöl in the Persian district of Maku. Yet others had winter quarters on the eastern and southern slopes of Mount Ağrı and in the district of Ottoman Bayezid (see Map 3).[594] The Celali was fragmented by the imposition of imperial boundaries. During the early 1850s, the Celali was also divided into several clans: the Halikânlı (550 tents), the Sakânlı (480 tents), the Belhikânlı (560 tents), the Hasasorânlı (240 tents), and the Kızılbaşoğlu (150 tents). These sections competed fiercely for grazing lands and summer pastures, and unlike the confederations of the neighboring Haydaran and Zilan, it is difficult to argue that the Celalis comprised a well-integrated tribal confederation.[595] For instance, unlike the cases of the Zilan and Haydaran, no single chief exerted authority over all of the

[593] Blau, "Die Stamme des Nordöstlishen Kurdistan," 584-585.
[594] Foreign Office 424/7B, Protocol of the Fifteenth Conference, Procès-Verbal de la Quinzième Conférence, qui eut lieu a Erzeroum le 6 février, 1844, pour l'Exposition des Réclamations turco-persanes, February 6th 1844, 152.
[595] Derviş Paşa, "Tâhdîd-i hudûdd-ı İraniye'ye memur Ferik saadetlu Derviş Paşa hazretlerinin […] arz ve takdim eylediği müzekkiredir", Matbaa-yı Amire, Ş 21 sene 1286, 160-61.

Celali sub-divisions. Each clan had its own chief, and external alliances as well as competition among the clans depended entirely on borderland politics.

Hurşid Pasha, a member of the Ottoman-Persian boundary survey commission, stated that the total population of the Celali in the 1850s was 2380 tents, 1200 of which were located in the Ottoman Empire, 880 in Persia, and 300 in Russia.[596] However, these numbers are only applicable to a given moment in time. These tribes changed their alliances throughout the second half of the nineteenth century and migrated across the borders of the three empires depending to maximize the benefit they could extract from the land vis-à-vis the taxes and conscription imposed in a given imperial domain. The summer pastures of the Celalis were also divided. The slopes of Mount Ağrı and the pasturing grounds of Aladağ and Abagay in the Ottoman Empire, the Kazlıgöl district which was disputed between the Ottoman and Persian Empires, the Sinekî pastures shared between the Ottoman and Russian Empires, and Alagöz located in the Russian Empire were among the main grazing lands of the tribe's various clans.[597] As discussed in this part, the Celalis had to struggle not only with imperial powers but also with rival clans and tribes to access their traditional grazing lands and winter quarters.

Since the sections of the Celalis were roaming highly-contested territories, they were subject to the policies of the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires. However, political competition in this geography also enabled them to participate in the politics of the borderland. Ottoman and Persian authorities, in particular, knew that one way to strengthen their claims to disputed lands was to gain the support of

[596] Mehmed Hurşid, *Seyâhatnâme-ı Hudud*, 262-263.
[597] Mehmed Hurşid, *Seyâhatnâme-ı Hudud*, 160-161. See also Foreign Office 424/7B, Protocol of the Fifteenth Conference, Procès-Verbal de la Quinzième Conférence, qui eut lieu a Erzeroum le 6 février, 1844, pour l'Exposition des Réclamations turco-persanes, February 6th 1844, 152.

local tribes. The acquisition of these lands was also important for maintaining the loyalty of the tribes to the imperial power as the land was vitally important to their pastoral economy. Thus, obtaining the loyalty of the nomads and demarcating the border were complex, intertwined processes. While Russian authorities tried to keep the Celalis out of their territory, accusing them of responsibility for all kinds of atrocities along their frontier, the Ottoman and Persian Empires, starting in the late 1840s, tried to win the support of the Celalis since they occupied disputed territories along the northern part of the Ottoman and Persian border.

The disputed land along the northeast part of the Ottoman-Persian border included the villages of Tambat and Yarımkaya, which were located to the southeast of Little Ağrı. Another contested region was Kazlıgöl to the southwest of Bayezid. It contained only a few ruined villages but was particularly favorable for grazing animals (See figures 5 and 6 for the maps of disputed borders).

Figure 5. Map of the Celali tribe and disputed borders
Source: [Reproduced with QGIS after BOA, HRT.h 457 with additions]

The villages of Tambat and Yarımkaya were used as winter quarters by the Sakânlı section of the Celali tribe.[598] According to the Ottoman officials, these two villages had been part of the Ottoman imperial domain, but during the Ottoman-Persian War of 1821-23, they, along with several surrounding villages, were invaded by the Persians and had been held by Ali Khan, the governor of Maku, since then.[599] In 1843, when Ottoman and Persian authorities started to meet during the Erzurum

[598] Mehmed Hurşid, *Seyâhatnâme-ı Hudud*, 261.
[599] BOA, İ.H.R 75/3634, 27 CA 1267 (March 30, 1851) "*Bayezid Sancağının res-i hududunda vaki Tanbat nahiyesi mine'l kadim devlet-i aliyyenin mülk-i sarihi olub yirmi beş seneden berü Maku hükümdarı Ali Han fuzulen tasarruf etmekde ve altmış beş tarihine gelince beher sene vergüsünü tahsil etmekde bulunmuş*"

Conference to define the boundary dividing the two empires, Ottoman authorities made their first attempt to reclaim the villages. They sent the Belhikânlı clan of the Celali tribe to these villages to settle and colonize them.[600] However, as mentioned above, these villages were also inhabited by the Sakânlı clan of the Celali tribe who had allied themselves with the Persian Empire. The Belhikanlı managed to hold onto a few of the surrounding villages for a while, but the village of Tambat remained in the hands of the Sakânlı, who defined themselves as Persian subjects, until 1850.[601]

In 1850, Ottoman authorities initiated an investigation into the Ottoman archives to unearth documents proving that these lands had been part of the Ottoman Empire. In 1850, the governor of Erzurum, Mehmed Hamdi Pasha, argued that Tambat and Yarımkaya and even the district of Maku had once been part of the sanjak of Bayezid which had been governed as a yurtluk-ocaklık by the descendants of Behlül Pasha.[602] According to Ottoman sources, Maku had been granted as a yurtluk-ocaklık district to a certain Abdülfettah Bey, who was indeed a descendant of Behlül Pasha, in 1725.[603] Ottoman sources also indicated that Maku and the villages in its administrative reach were parts of the Ottoman Empire in some periods.[604] However, when a member of the local dynasty of Bayezid, Mahmud Pasha, married the daughter of Cafer Khan, the governor of Persian Khoy, Maku was given to Cafer Khan as a dowry. Since then, the Ottomans lost their connection to the district.[605]

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[600] Hurşid Paşa, "[…] Ankara Valisi esbak müteveffa Hurşid Paşa tarafından kaleme alınmış layihadır", Bab-ı Ali Matbaası, Istanbul, 1300, 39.
[601] Hurşid Paşa, "[…] Ankara Valisi esbak müteveffa Hurşid Paşa tarafından kaleme alınmış layihadır", Bab-ı Ali Matbaası, Istanbul, 1300, 39.
[602] BOA, I.HR 65/3194, 12 CA 66 (March 16, 1850) "*Bayezid Sancağı dahilinde devlet-i iranlı tarafından müdahele olunmakda olan Tanbat Nahiyesi'ne İranlu'nun hiçbir alakası olmadığı misüllü Maku Kazası dahi muzafatıyla beraber devlet-i aliyye ebeddü'l devamın memâlikinden olub hatta saadetlü Behlül Paşa'nın ecdadının ba berat-ı ali yurtluk ve ocaklığı dahilinde idüğü ve berat-ı mezkur-ı mukaddemce saadetlü Enveri Efendi hazretlerine verildiği*"
[603] BOA, I.HR 65/3194, 12 CA 66 (March 16, 1850).
[604] BOA, I.HR 65/3194, 12 CA 66 (March 16, 1850).
[605] BOA, I.HR 65/3194, 12 CA 66 (March 16, 1850).

These Ottoman documents were presented to the British Consul of Erzurum, James Brant, and he was requested to pen a letter certifying the originality of these sources. Brant in return wrote that "upon the request of Hamdi Pasha, James Brant wrote to Sir Stanford Canning: At the request of his excellency Hamdy Pasha, I give him this letter to your excellency, to say that I have enquired of several people, who know well the country about Bayezid, and I have been assured by all that Tambat belongs to Turkey."[606] Obviously, Ottoman authorities sought foreign support for their claims to disputed lands in the second half of the nineteenth century

When a group of Celalis migrated to Ottoman Bayezid and declared their loyalty to the Ottoman Empire in 1850, the authorities of Bayezid immediately settled these tribes in the disputed villages of Tambat and Yarımkaya.[607] The chiefs of the tribe, Ateş, Tozo and Suleyman Aghas, were bestowed with the right to collect the taxes of these villages on behalf of the Ottoman Empire.[608] The following year, the local council of Bayezid proudly reported that taxes amounting to 3,111 piasters had been collected from Tambat and Yarımkaya through the agency of the Celali chiefs and that these two villages have now been rescued from Persian invasion.[609] From the perspective of Ottoman officials, securing the loyalty of local tribes and managing the collection of taxes were ways of integrating disputed lands into Ottoman territory. As was also the case for the Haydaran, the Ottomans claimed certain areas in the Ottoman-Persian borderland by obtaining the loyalty of the tribes and settling them on contested lands.

[606] BOA, I.HR 65/3194, 12 CA 66 (March 16, 1850).
[607] BOA, İ.HR 75/3634, 27 CA 67 (March 30, 1851).
[608] Hurşid Paşa, "[…] Ankara Valisi esbak müteveffa Hurşid Paşa tarafından kaleme alınmış layihadır", Bab-ı Ali Matbaası, Istanbul, 1300, 39.
[609] BOA İ.HR 75/3634, 27 CA 67 (March 30, 1851).

On the Persian side, the story was entirely different. Persian authorities insisted that Tambat and Yarımkaya were part of Qajar territory. The Persian vizier, Mirza Agha Khan, reiterated the articles of the Erzurum Treaty of 1847 and argued that at the time the Erzurum Treaty was signed, these districts were under the governance of the Persian Empire. Since the treaty was intended to protect the status quo, Tambat and Yarımkaya should remain under the administration of the Persian Empire until the boundary commission reached a conclusion regarding these villages. For the time being, however, local tribes should be allowed to use the districts without any interference of either the Ottoman or Persian Empire.[610]

The dispute over these territories and the yet undefined border provided nomads with relative independence and enabled them to negotiate their position with the two imperial powers. From the 1840s onwards, the Celalis would migrate to Ottoman or Persian lands depending on the relative benefit they could extract. The various factions of the Celalis residing on contested land would declare their loyalty to either the Ottoman or Persian Empire depending on the limitations and immunities offered to them. Attempts to incorporate, tax, and conscribe nomads by force were clearly no option vis-à-vis nomads who had accepted Ottoman subjecthood; however, those inclined to defect to the rival empire would become targets of imperial power.

[610] BOA, HR.SYS 705/2, Şevval 1274, (May 16, 1858).

Figure 6. Disputed lands around sanjak of Bayezid
Source: [BOA, HRT.h 457]

In summer 1852, the local council of Bayezid reported that a certain Mosik, one of the chiefs of the Halikânlı clan of the Celali tribe, had engaged in the large-scale plunder of the villages of Bayezid with the support of a number of bandits and thieves.[611] According to the council, Mosik was known for banditry and hijacking along the frontier. In previous years, he had refused to come to the provincial capital

[611] BOA, MVL 253/86, 17 Ramazan 68 (July 5,1852) "*Celali Aşiretinden Haliki taifesi muhtarı Mosik nam kimsene öteden berü eşkıya ve edebsiz ve kutta-i tarik ve hırsızlık ile meluf bulunmuş olduğundan*"

when called, he had resisted and attacked zaptiye forces, he had refused to pay taxes, and he intended to move certain Yezidi houses of Karakilise to Russian territory.[612] When the council of Bayezid dismissed him and appointed someone else as chief of the tribe, he vowed to migrate with forty tents of nomads to the Persian side of the border. However, Mosik was captured along with his brother and son before migrating to Persia, and the council of Bayezid proposed their immediate imprisonment.[613] The newly-appointed governor of Bayezid, Pertev Bey, the governor of Erzurum, Arif Pasha, and the Ottoman representative of border commission, Derviş Pasha, also strongly recommended their imprisonment. While Derviş Pasha stressed the importance of maintaining good relations with these tribes in Ottoman territory until the demarcation of the Ottoman-Persian border, the governor of Erzurum proposed that Mosik and his supporters be exiled to far distant lands of the empire, like Algeria or Rumelia. Mosik was sent to Erzurum, charged with several crimes, and kept in prison for a year.[614]

However, by late 1857, Mosik reentered the scene with his large-scale banditry. He and his followers attacked a local tribe called the Halisânlı,[615] plundered their commodities and animals, and wounded twenty-eight members of the tribe.[616] The council of Bayezid prepared a comprehensive report regarding the attack, which, interesting, was also signed by rival chiefs from among the Celali tribe. Mosik was accused of many crimes including murder (*katl-i nüfus*), theft and plunder (*nehb ve garet-i emvâl*), and the assault of women (*hetk-i ırz*).[617] According to the council, the

[612] BOA, MVL 253/86, 17 Ramazan 68 (July 5, 1852).
[613] BOA, MVL 253/86, 17 Ramazan 68 (July 5, 1852).
[614] BOA, MVL 569/50, 25 Receb 1274 (March 11, 1858).
[615] The name of this tribe most probably misspelled in this document. It should be Halhesini, a subsection of the Sepki wandering in Bayezid district.
[616] BOA, A.MKT.UM 322/52, 19 Ca 1274 (January 5, 1858).
[617] BOA, MVL 569/50, 27 Receb 1274 (March 13, 1858).

first reason for the delay in his punishment was the conviction that he should be brought under state control by peaceful means. As Mosik and his supporters lived close to the Persian border, the authorities of Bayezid feared their migration to Persia or their allegiance to Persian authorities. The second reason for the delay was because Mosik, after being dismissed as chief of his clan in Ottoman territory, had migrated with others to the Persian side of the border, where he had been welcomed by Persian authorities. Furthermore, he had been appointed chief of the Celalis in Iran and granted the right to collect the taxes of the villages of Tambat and Yarımkaya. The council of Bayezid reported that while some of the taxes collected were kept by Mosik as a reward for his loyalty to the Persian Empire, the remainder was given to Ali Khan, the governor of Maku.[618]

As discussed earlier, the Ottomans had settled some sections of the Celalis who were loyal to the Ottoman Empire in Tambat and Yarımkaya and claimed these two villages part of the Ottoman Empire. However, the Persians were also playing their cards. By settling Mosik and his supporters who were loyal to the Persian Empire there, they too were claiming the same land. Indeed, Persian authorities also contacted Tozo Ağa and tried to win his loyalty by promising decorations and awards.[619] The inclination of Mosik to the Persian side and his widespread banditry in Ottoman territory increased tensions among the chiefs of the Celali tribe and led to the further fragmentation of the tribal structure. In 1858, other chiefs of the Celali nomads, including Ateş, Tozo, and Koco Aghas, submitted a collective petition to the council of Bayezid emphasizing their loyalty to the Ottoman Empire.[620] In their petition, the tribal chiefs emphasized that their own honor was harmed by the

[618] BOA, MVL 569/50, 27 Receb 1274 (March 13, 1858).
[619] BOA, HR.SYS 680/5/137, 3 Ca 75 (December 9, 1859).
[620] BOA, MVL 569/50, 25 Receb 1274 (March 11, 1858).

banditry in which Mosik and his followers engaged. They promised the government to prevent banditry among tribal members under their authority, hand over those that committed crimes, and help government authorities arrest Mosik. If Mosik were not successfully arrested, they also promised not to accept him into the Celali tribe. Two years later, Tozo was decorated with the fifth level of Mecidiye and given a 250 piasters monthly salary for his acceptance of Ottoman subjecthood and loyalty to the Ottoman Empire.[621]

The disputes between the Ottoman and Persian Empires over Tambat and Yarımkaya villages caused the further disintegration of the Celali tribe. The rivalry among different sections of the Celali nomads over the right to use these villages as winter quarters and splits within the tribal structure were intensified by the disputes between empires. The case of the Kazlıgöl district best exemplifies how the Celali was influenced by inter-imperial rivalries. As mentioned above, in addition to the villages of Tambat and Yarımkaya, the Kazlıgöl district was also disputed between the Ottoman and Persian Empires. This region and its surrounding highlands were the favored pasturing grounds for the animals of the Belhikanlı and Kandiki sections of the Celali tribe. It was also the site of the Ottoman border quarantine station. During winter, the portable Ottoman quarantine was stationed in the village of Kızıl Dize, but in summer it was moved to the Kazlıgöl district as the road connecting Tabriz and Erzurum passed through Kazlıgöl. Moreover, the region was used as the pasturing ground for the horses of troops in Bayezid.[622] Obviously, this district was crucial for the Ottomans, and losing it to the Persians would entail the loss of several

[621] BOA, A.TSF 30/61, 9 Receb 276 (February 1, 1860) and BOA, A.MKT.UM 562/95, 9 L 78 (April 9, 1862).
[622] BOA, I.HR 177/9735, 7 Zilhicce 76 (June 26, 1860). See also Blau, "Die Stamme des Nordöstlishen Kurdistan."

sections of the Celali and Ademânlu tribes, as these nomads needed this district's pasturing grounds.[623]

Like Tambat and Yarımkaya, the Ottomans insisted on Kazlıgöl. According to Vamık Efendi, the kaymakam of Bayezid, Kazlıgöl had also been part of the yurtluk-ocaklık of Bayezid and had been under the respective administrations of the Kurdish notables Ishak, Mahmud, and Behlül Pashas since the beginning of the nineteenth century. However, because of tribal depredations in the previous fifteen to twenty years and the general insecurity of the region, the villages of this district were uninhabited, their populations compelled to migrate to Bayezid.[624]

On June 6, 1860, Abdullah Bey, one of the military officers responsible for the demarcation of the border with the Persian Empire in Bayezid, reported that almost one thousand tents of Persian tribes including some Persian sections of Celali were violating Ottoman territory and grazing their animals in the southern villages of Bayezid.[625] Abdullah Bey accused the governor of Maku of encouraging these tribes to use pastures in Ottoman territory. To prevent the use of Kazlıgöl's pastures by Persian tribes, regular Ottoman troops were directed to the region, and upon their arrival the tribes returned to the Persian district of Maku.[626] Abdullah Bey also stated that the Persians had started cultivating the land of Kazlıgöl and that the entire district would be lost to the Persians if Ottoman authorities did not act to prevent it. At the end of his report, he also expressed his intent to carry out an investigation into the Kazlıgöl district as Persian intervention had become much more obvious.

On June 11, a commission comprised of Abdullah Bey, Vehbi Efendi, the acting kaymakam of Bayezid, some members of the local council of Bayezid, and a

[623] BOA, I. HR 177/9735.
[624] BOA, HR.SYS 705/2, 22 Zilhicce 279, (June 10, 1863).
[625] BOA, I.HR 177/9735, 17 Zilkade 1276 (June 6, 1860).
[626] BOA, I.HR 177/9735, 17 Zilkade 1276 (June 6, 1860).

detachment of troops comprised of locals and Ottoman Celalis arrived in the Kazlıgöl region.[627] Not much later, the governor of Avacık, Khalifa Quli Khan, also arrived with forces composed borderland tribes loyal to Persian authorities. The Ottoman commission met and negotiated with Persian authorities in Kazlıgöl, but the conversations came to a deadlock. Khalifa Quli Khan demanded the commission withdraw its camp to Hazine Gediği, which according to Persian authorities was the actual border. However, the Ottoman commission insisted on staying, arguing that Kazlıgöl had always been part of the Ottoman imperial domain. The quarrel swiftly turned into a small battle between the two forces.[628] Tozo Ağa, the chief of the Celali tribe on the Ottoman side, was killed by the Persian side.[629] Having no other option, the members of the commission and the military detachment withdrew to Bayezid. As Ateş rightly states in such inter-imperial competition, the Celalis were both the attackers and victims.[630] As the imperial powers engaged in competition over disputed land, different sections of the Celali allied with one or the other of these empires and became part of the struggle. Like the winter settlements of Tambat and Yarımkaya, the rich pasturing grounds of Kazlıgöl were a source of contention among different segments of the same tribe.

In the following years, Ottoman central and provincial authorities tried to find ways to obtain the loyalty of the chiefs of the Celalis. After the death of Tozo Agha, Ottoman authorities recognized his son, Ömer Agha, as the new chief of the tribe and

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[627] Foreign Office, 78/1521, From Edmund Calvert to John Russell, Erzurum, June 19, 1860.
[628] Indeed, the Ottoman and Persian accounts of this encounter are very different. While Ottoman authorities were insisting that they were the Persian authorities who started the quarrel and attacked. Persian authorities argued that they were the Ottomans who invaded the Persian lands, grazed the cultivated lands of Kazlıgöl, and also attacked on Persian authorities. See BOA, I.HR 179/9885, (1860) See also: Foreign Office, 78/1521, From Edmund Calvert to John Russell, Erzurum, June 25th 1860.
[629] BOA, I. HR. 177/9735, 22 ZA 1276 (June 11, 1860), BOA, YA.HUS 501/197, 29 Muharrem 1277 (August 17, 1860).
[630] Ateş, "Empires at the Margin: Towards a History of the Ottoman-Iranian Borderland and the Borderland Peoples, 1843-1881," 277.

granted him monthly salary. The disputes over Tambat, Yarımkaya, and Kazlıgöl remained unresolved until the beginning of the twentieth century, and the Celalis continued to use these lands as winter quarters and grazing lands, allying with either Ottoman or Persian authorities, as necessary. The struggle over pasturing grounds and the alliances in which they were compelled to engage further fragmented the tribal structure. Like the case of the Zilan, the Celalis also further disintegrated and turned into small groups under the leadership of different chiefs.

5.4 The case of the Haydaran

> Like the tribes of the imperial state, we also want to settle and be regarded as among settled population by building houses together with neighbors at our side. In that case, we will not refuse the census by hiding people, and like other settled tribes, we will pay the taxes imposed on us in the future according to our financial strength and our settled population. Moreover, with a supply of agricultural tools, we will occupy ourselves with farming and pay the tithe and other taxes in time.… If anyone among our tribal members dares to oppose the will of the imperial state, we will submit them to the governors of our sub-provinces to be properly punished, and we will thus comply with every order and rule related to religious and civil law and also the local customs of the administrators. Thus, we ask for permission to be settled in some places in Van and its vicinity or in some abandoned places where our lives and property will be safe. There we will find peace and comfort by building houses and engaging in agriculture and we will be grateful to our royal majesty…[631]

In the summer of 1848, just six months after the defeat and exile of the local dynasty of Van, around eight hundred tents of Haydaran nomads migrated from Persian Khoy to Ottoman Van. Unlike the former migrations of Haydaran, this migration was not the seasonal migration that had been taking place for at least twelve years between their winter quarters in the Persian Empire and grazing lands in the Ottoman Empire. Upon their arrival in Ottoman territory, Haydar Agha and seventeen headman

[631] BOA, I.MSM 52/1345, 21 Ş 264 (July 23, 1848). See Appendix D for the Ottoman Turkish version of the text.

(*oymak ağası*) submitted the petition quoted above to the administrative council of Van. They mentioned that twelve years earlier they had been compelled to flee to Persian territory to save their lives and property from the notorious bandit, Khan Mahmud, a member of the Kurdish Mahmudi dynasty, who had ruled over extensive territory in Van.[632] According to petitioners, now that the oppression of Khan Mahmud had come to an end on account of the efforts of the sultan, they decided to return to Ottoman territory as they had always actually been Ottoman subjects. In their collective petition, the tribal chiefs adopted the language and vocabulary of the Tanzimat Period, appealed for Ottoman subjecthood, requested proper settlements for their sedentarization, and promised to build houses, consent to the census, engage in agriculture, pay their taxes, and act according to the rules and regulations of the auspicious Tanzimat (*Tanzimat-ı Hayriye*) and the Ottoman sultan.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, in the mid-1830s large numbers of the Haydaran nomads crossed into the Persian region of Khoy. Only a small number, under the leadership of Sultan Agha, remained in Ottoman territory until 1839.[633] Those who had moved to Persia started to use the Persian villages of Khoy and Maku as their main winter quarters and migrated seasonally to the rich pasturing grounds of Abagay on the Ottoman side of the border during the summers. This section of the Haydaran tribe maintained this regular pattern of seasonal migration for at least twelve years. Abagay, the pasturing ground on the Ottoman side of the border, was one of the most favored grazing grounds in the region over which several Ottoman and Persian tribes competed and struggled during the second half of the century.[634]

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[632] See Chapter 5 for the revolt of Khan Mahmud against the application of Tanzimat.
[633] Foreign Office 424/7B, Protocol of the Fifteenth Conference, Procès-Verbal de la Quinzième Conférence, qui eut lieu a Erzeroum le 6 février, 1844, pour l'Exposition des Réclamations turco-persanes, February 6, 1844.
[634] For an account of tribal conflicts on this land, see Çiftçi, "Ottoman Policy in the Ottoman-Iranian Borderland during the late 19th Century."

An Ottoman official highlighted the fertility of the region stating that "maybe neither in Iran nor in Turan is there a land comparable to Abagay."[635] What enabled the Haydaran to access such a fertile grazing ground during the summers was the indirectness of rule over the frontier. The local Kurdish dynasty known as the Mahmudi allowed these Kurdish nomads to graze their animals on these lands in the Ottoman Empire in return for grazing taxes.

The migration of the Haydaran nomads into the Ottoman realm in 1848 and their appeal for Ottoman subjecthood corresponded with the migrations of the Zilan and Celalis into the Ottoman Empire. Like many other borderland tribes, no decisive conclusion had been reached about the contested nature of the Haydaran Confederation even in the Treaty of Erzurum signed in 1847. The Ottoman and Persian sides had mutually agreed on preventing the seasonal migrations of the nomadic tribes and cross-border tribal banditry by deploying imperial soldiers to the border. Regarding subjecthood of the contested tribes, the Erzurum Treaty allowed them to decide for themselves, albeit irrevocably; those whose subjecthood was uncontested would be returned to their home country. Knowledgeable of the clauses of the Erzurum Treaty, the chiefs of the Haydaran may have wanted to take their chances on the Ottoman side, but another reason for their migration to the Ottoman side was the elimination of the local dynasty of Van. Taking the exile of the Kurdish rulers as an opportunity, they sought to fill the power vacuum in this region just like the Celalis who had migrated to Bayezid a year after the exile of the local Kurdish dynasty there. The migration of the Haydaran families to the Ottoman side of the border was also related to a locust infestation on the Persian side. Dr. Wright, a British agent in the Ottoman-Persian borderland, noted that locusts had spread from

[635] BOA, Y.EE 33/5, "*Abaga nahiyesi gayet menbit ve mahsuldar ve ol havalide ve belki bütün İran ve Turanda emsalsiz bir arazi idüğü*"

Tiflis southward throughout the districts of Erevan, Khoy, Salmas, and Oroomiah and ruined all types of grain in 1847.[636]

The governor of the province of Kurdistan,[637] Esad Pasha, pointed out that mobile populations in the Ottoman-Persian borderland undeniably threatened imperial boundaries and the security of the region. In his mind, the explanation of the migration of Haydaran nomads to the Ottoman side of the border was the locust swarms and famine that had hit in Persian territory, which put them in a difficult position. Another concern of Esad Pasha was that such a mobile population would disturb newly-sedentarized tribes of the region and even lead to their re-nomadization and migration to Persia.[638] However, not all Ottoman officials shared his opinion. Upon receiving the aforementioned petition of the Haydaran chiefs, the kaymakam of Van, Mehmed Reşid Bey, asserted that the tribe would be useful in several respects once their sedentarization in the district of Abagay was completed. The sedentarization of such a vast number of nomads would not only increase tax revenues but also lead to the development and improvement of the district. He further claimed that peasants and tribes who had left their villages due to the oppression of the Kurdish bandits (referring to the Kurdish dynasties that had governed the sanjaks) would return to the district. At the end of his report, he warned that if their sedentarization was not completed in summer or if their basic requirements for grain, hay, and shelter were not satisfied, the Haydaran families

[636] Letter from Dr. Wright, August 26 1847, in Missionary Herald containing the Proceedings of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, with a view of other benevolent operations for the year 1848. Vol XLIV, Boston, Press of T.R. Marvin, 1848.
[637] Officially the province of Kurdistan was formed in 1847. Its formation coincides with the suppression of the Bedirkhan Beg Revolt and the Second Treaty of Erzurum. Until its dissolution in 1867, it was reorganized several times. It first included the sanjaks of Mardin, Muş, and Van. In 1849 the sanjaks of Hakkari, Dersim and Diyarbekir also became its parts. See Özoğlu, *Kurdish notables and the Ottoman State*, 59-63.
[638] Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler Bağlamında Bedirhan Bey Olayı," 254-255; BOA, I.MMS 52/1343, 11 Ş 1264 (July 13, 1848).

would disperse to other regions.[639] After a series of correspondence in September 1848, the imperial capital asked the opinion of Enveri Efendi, a member of the border survey commission, regarding the names, numbers, and locations of the contested tribes and particularly the subjecthood of the Haydaran tribe and their prospects. Enveri Efendi argued in his reply that the borderland tribes should be treated according to Article 3 of the earlier and Article 8 of the newly-signed Treaty of Erzurum, which clearly considered the Haydaran to be contested between the Ottoman and Persian empires.[640]

Haydaran nomads were allocated to villages in Van and Bayezid in small numbers by the renting of peasant houses during the winter of 1848. However, the Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinances noted that because they were among the contested tribes, they needed to be treated as guests (*misafiret tarikiyle*) of the Ottoman Empire until the work of the border survey commission was complete and a final decision regarding the future of contested tribes was made.[641]

The Haydaran spent the winter of 1848 in Ottoman territory. However, the following year, a stream of correspondence between the imperial capital and the frontier governors of the Ottoman Empire about their fate continued. In September 1849, Esad Pasha, stated that due to the contested nature of the Haydaran nomads, their sedentarization had not been fully implemented. He warned the imperial capital that these nomads migrated across borders depending on the benefits they could extract from each side. If they were not settled immediately and treated well, they would soon return to Persian territory and even take some of the settled tribal population of the region to the Persian side with them. As a temporary solution, he

[639] BOA, I.MMS 52/1345, 264 (1848).
[640] BOA, I.MSM 52/1345, 22 L 64 (September 19, 1848).
[641] BOA, I.MVL 132/3551, 12 ZA 65 (October 10, 1849).

proposed the allocation of the nomads to peasant villages in small numbers in the coming winter and to give the chief of the Haydaran tribe, Haydar Agha, a salary to protract his loyalty to the Ottoman State. As with the cases of the Zilan and Celalis, he argued that once the subjecthood of these nomads was determined and their sedentarization completed, tribal chiefs inclined toward the Persian side would need to be exiled to western parts of the empire for the sake of the stability of the region.[642]

In 1849, Haydar Ağa and other tribal chiefs of the Haydaran tribe submitted a petition to the authorities of Bayezid in which they listed the inhabited and deserted villages of the district of Patnos. In their petition, they requested to enliven twenty-two abandoned villages in the district and drew attention to the fact that ten villages had already been settled by the members of the Haydaran tribe under the chief, Şeyho three years earlier (See Figure 7 for these villages).[643] Despite these petitions, Haydar Ağa migrated back to the Persian side of the border, possibly because of the pressures of the Persian authorities. Though a group of Haydaran nomads under chief Abdal Ağa stayed in the Ottoman territory. In 1849, frontier authorities of the Ottoman Empire demanded that monthly salaries be given to such borderland tribes to encourage them to stay in Ottoman territory until the survey commission reached a final conclusion about their subjecthood. In late 1849, Abdal Ağa was granted a monthly salary of 500 piasters.[644]

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[642] BOA, A.MKT 227/13, 11 Zilkade 65 (September 28, 1849).
[643] BOA, I.MVL 188/5680, 21 N 65 (August 10, 1849).
[644] Similar temporary salaries were also given to the other chiefs of the borderland tribes in order to keep them within the Ottoman lands until the demarcation of the Ottoman-Persian boundary. See BOA, A.AMD 23/83; BOA, A.AMD 29/53; A.MKT.MVL 23/53; BOA, C.DH 307/15331; BOA, I.MVL 159/4585 See also Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler Bağlamında Bedirhan Bey Olayı," 256; Bingül, "Tanzimat Dönemi Merkezileşme Çabaları Sürecinde Van ve Çevresindeki Aşiretlerin İskan ve Adaptasyon Problemleri," 144.

In March 1851, just before the seasonal migrations of the pastoral nomads of the borderland, the administrative council of Bayezid drew attention to increasing insecurity in the district of Abagay during the summers and demanded permission to prevent the migration of Persian nomads by sending a cavalry to the border. Indeed, the pasturing grounds of Abagay, which were close to the Iranian border, were contested – at least from the perspective of Persian authorities[645] – between the Ottoman and Persian Empires and had been used as summer quarters by several borderland tribes. As mentioned above, the district was under the control of Khan Mahmud, a member of the local dynasty that had ruled the region for centuries, as yurtluk-ocaklık until the implementation of the Tanzimat.[646] The administrative council and kaymakam of Bayezid emphasized in their statements that the district belonged to the Ottoman Empire and needed to be protected from the incursions of tribes who could ally themselves with the Persian Empire.

Indeed, as Çiftçi points out, it was not only the parcel of land but also the Haydaran and Celali tribes who used this land for grazing were contested between the Ottoman and Persian Empires.[647] In the 1850s, Abagay as an unstable border region used by mobile populations that resembled other disputed lands along the border discussed in this chapter, like Tambat, Yarımkaya, and Kazlıgöl. Ottoman policy on this region and the nomads that used it for grazing exemplifies the geopolitics of state intervention in the ecology of pastoral nomadism. In 1851, the local council of Bayezid proposed that the district be closed to use by Persian

[645] In 1850, the governor of Azerbaijan in his conversation with Rich Stevens, the British Consul of Tabriz, argued that Abagay and Mahmudi are disputed lands between the Ottoman and Persian empires and Persian nomads should have the right to use the region without any difficulty. Foreign Office 78/834, Translation of Hamdi Pasha's Letter to Mr. Brant 24th Shaban 1266 (July 5, 1850)
[646] Hurşid Paşa, "[…] Ankara Valisi esbak müteveffa Hurşid Paşa tarafından kaleme alınmış layihadır", Bab-ı Ali Matbaası, Istanbul, 1300, 34.
[647] Çiftçi, "Fragile Alliances in the Ottoman East," 218.

nomads. According to the council, cutting them off from their summer pastures would eventually force them to accept Ottoman subjecthood since pasturing grounds on the Persian side of the border were insufficient and such grazing lands were essential for their livestock.[648] Indeed, state intervention in the ecology of pastoral nomadic tribes – cutting them off from water supplies and preventing their migration to summer or winter quarters – was a widespread practice in other regions of the empire as well throughout the nineteenth century.[649] The governor of Erzurum shared the same concerns as the council of Bayezid and proposed mobile units of soldiers be deployed in the district. He also argued that preventing the migration of nomads would not affect Ottoman tribes since none of them migrated to Persia for grazing lands.[650]

As the border survey commission held meetings regarding the demarcation and delimitation of the Ottoman-Persian border, Ottoman authorities tried to prevent the access of Persian tribes to Abagay to bolster Ottoman claims over this parcel of land. In 1853, Pertev Bey, the kaymakam of Bayezid, argued that the district was overtaken by at least 3,000 tents of the Persian tribes and a few hundred thousand sheep every summer. Even the governors (*hakim*) of the Persian towns of Khoy and Maku used Abagay as a pasturing ground for their animals. Most of the peasantry had left their villages and migrated to surrounding towns due to the harassment of the tribes who used it extensively as a pasturing ground, so the entire district had been left deserted.[651] Despite its large area, the region only had fourteen villages. Pertev

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[648] BOA, I.MVL 225/7665, 7 CA 67 (March 10, 1851) "*İran toprağında yaylakıye mahallerinin kılleti cihetiyle aşâirinin sahra-yı merkûme gelmeye ihtiyacı olmadığından bu husus layıkıyla men olunduğu vakit aşâir-i merkûme... kalarak bittabi tayin devlet-i aliye kabulen külliyen berü taraflara nakl-i hane edecekleri bi şüpheden ari olmadığı*"
[649] Koç, "Kışla, Kordon ve Asker, Tanzimat Dönemi'nde Göçebe Aşiretleri Kontrol Etmek."
[650] BOA, I.MVL 225/7665, 25 CA 67 (March 28, 1851).
[651] BOA, MVL 258/49, Gurre-i Receb 69 (April/May 1853).

Bey, like the previous kaymakam, argued that the reason the Persian tribes referred Abagay as a pasturing ground stemmed from the shortage of fodder on the Persian side of the border. On the other hand, the Iranian towns of Khoy and Maku provided better shelter for the nomads during the winters due to milder temperatures. Nonetheless, the shortage of grazing lands during the summers forced them to migrate into Ottoman territory, particularly Abagay. He proposed that the closure of the border and the prevention of Persian nomads from entering the district would cut them off from their livelihood, hence forcing them to accept Ottoman suzerainty in the long run. To achieve this, he proposed the district be divided into two administered by the sanjaks of Van and Bayezid. The number of zabtiyes should be increased from fifty to seventy-five to protect the border during the summers.[652]

Upon receiving Pertev Beys' proposal, the Supreme Council (Meclis-i Vala) again asked the opinion of Derviş Pasha, the Ottoman representative on the border survey commission. Derviş Pasha stated that despite having been violated by Persian authorities several times, Abagay had always been part of the Ottoman Empire. He further argued that although the district needed to be protected from the incursions of Persian tribes, it should not be governed by two different administrative centers; the district was large and rule by two administrative units would cause disputes among the tribes using the region.[653] Derviş Pasha's concern was to maintain the stability of the Haydaran tribe and reduce the possibility of fragmentation or disputes within the

[652] BOA, MVL 258/49, Gurre Receb 69, (April/May 1853), "*Zikr olunan Hoy ve Maku taraflarında mevsim-i şitada hayvanat barındıralacak münasib yerler var ise de yaz vakitlerinde otlatacak meralar bulunmadığından ashab-ı hayvanatın ziyade saklayub ve hayvanatını beslemeye dahi bir dürlü çare bulamayub memurin-i İraniye ekser hayvanatını bi'l zurur firoht ederek, fakat aşair takımının medar-ı taayüş ve idareleri hayvanat mahsularına münhasır ve mütevakıf idüğünden koyunların bir resini bile satamayub berü taraf aşairi misüllü mezkur yaylaya mürurlarıyla rey-i hayvanata ruhsat verilmek içun iran canibinde bulunan aşair beher hal beru canibe dehalete mecbur olarak kile kile saye-i adâlet vaye-i hazret-i şahâneye ilticâya müsaraat eyleyeceği bedihi*"
[653] BOA, MVL 258/49, 25 S 69 (June 3, 1853).

tribal structure. Division of the region into two would bring about disputes among the tribes who used the landscape.

Indeed, the approach proposed by the Administrative Council and kaymakams of the sanjak became the basis for the policies of the Ottoman Empire regarding borderland tribes in ensuing decades. Ottoman authorities, starting from the beginning of the 1850s, tried to prevent access of the nomadic tribes of the Persian Empire to Abagay while at the same time supporting and sedentarizing those in the district who accepted Ottoman subjecthood.[654] The Haydaran tribe, as mentioned, had used Abagay as a pasturing ground during the summers; however, as crossing the border became increasingly difficult in time, they were compelled to accept Ottoman subjecthood in coming decades if they wanted to have access to Abagay.

In 1854, Ali Agha, the brother of Haydar Agha, migrated with four hundred tents of nomads to Ottoman territory and requested shelter from frontier authorities of the Ottoman Empire.[655] Like other incoming nomads, they were welcomed and immediately shown places to settle. Ali Agha was granted a monthly salary of 200 piasters for life (*kayd-ı hayat*).[656] About 180 tents of Haydaran nomads were settled in the villages of Adilcevaz and Erciş (See Figure 7 for the map of these villages). To encourage their sedentarization, this branch of the Haydaran tribe was exempted from taxes for a limited period.[657] In 1855, the chief of the tribe, Ali Agha, was appointed as the director (mudir) of the Haydaran and honored with medals in return for his loyalty to the Ottoman Empire. A later source indicates that he was granted

[654] Çiftçi, "Fragile Alliances in the Ottoman East." 218-231.
[655] BOA, I.MVL 323/13765, 21 ZA 70 (August 15, 1854).
[656] BOA, I.MVL 323/13765, 9 CA 71 (January 28, 1855).
[657] BOA, I.MVL 337/14534, 22 CA 71 (February 10, 1855).

with 2000 piasters monthly salary.[658] He promised to protect the Ottoman border against the incursions of Persian tribes and to enliven the villages of the district of Abagay with his nomads. Compared to earlier migrations of the Haydaran to the Ottoman side, this migration was more permanent. In 1857, Otto Blau recounted that almost one thousand tents of the Haydaran, what he identified as the tribe's western branch, were wandering in the districts to the north of Van.[659]

Figure 7. Map of winter settlements of the Haydaran Tribe
Source: [Made with QGIS and based on BOA, I.MVL 188/5680, (1849) and BOA, I.MVL 337/14534, 1271, (1855) Some of the villages could not be located.]

Upon their migration to Abagay, Ali Ağa sought to establish his economic and political authority not only over the Haydaran but also the region as a whole, which stretched from Patnos in the west to Abagay in the east. The contested nature of the

[658] BOA, MVL 574/93, 74, (1857).
[659] Blau, "Die Stamme des Nordöstlishen Kurdistan," 594.

border and his protection of it from the Persian tribes afforded him the support of the Ottoman imperial capital. In 1857, for instance, Ali Agha warned local governors that the governor of Maku and his tribe and livestock were assembling near the border and intended to cross into Abagay. He not only demanded reinforcements for his cavalrymen that were protecting the border but also that Ottoman governors contact Persian authorities to prevent the migration of the nomads into Ottoman territory.[660] Before long, the provincial administration of Van contacted the governor of Maku, Ali Khan. The latter emphasized that not only the Abagay region but the Haydaran tribe itself were contested.[661] The governor of Maku further argued that Ali Agha had invited Persian nomads to Abagay and rented pasturing grounds to them in the same manner as did local Kurdish dynasties twenty years earlier. When questioned, Ali Agha replied that these nomads were part of his tribe. The governor of Van further reported that due to his protection of the border from the incursions of Persian tribes, Ali Agha claimed that he had not found time for the construction of houses required for the sedentarization of his nomads. He requested winter shelter for the coming winter, otherwise he had to send some nomads to winter quarters on the Persian side.[662]

As discussed, large numbers of Haydaran nomads were given settlements in the districts of Erciş, Adilcevaz, and Abagay during the Crimean War. However, since not all the nomads were settled and some sections of the tribe were still in the Persian towns of Khoy and Maku, Ali Agha, the chief of the confederation, maintained contact with his tribal members on the Persian side. Having settled a large area from Adilcevaz to Khoy, it was difficult to maintain authority over the

[660] BOA, A.MKT.UM 287/55, 73, (1857).
[661] BOA, A.MKT.UM 287/55, 21 ZA 73 (June 13, 1857).
[662] BOA, A.MKT.UM 287/55, 21 ZA 73 (June 13, 1857).

entire confederation. Moreover, his insistence on maintaining his relationships with Persian Haydaran nomads was not welcomed by Ottoman frontier authorities.

5.5.1 Rivalry and struggle for tribal leadership

Following the Crimean War, when Ali Agha still received a monthly salary as director of the Haydaran Confederation, Abdal Agha, another chiefly member of the Haydaran tribe was appointed as chief of the Erciş section by the governor of Van, Ismail Pasha.[663] The aim behind Ismail Pasha's appointment of Abdal Agha as chief of the Erciş section was to more effectively govern the Haydaran Confederation and to weaken the exclusive authority of Ali Agha over tribal members. Another concern of local governors was the latter's close relations with tribes located on the Persian side of the border. Without doubt, the appointment of Abdal Agha was a direct challenge to the authority of Ali Agha. As in the cases of the Zilan and Celali tribes, Ottoman frontier governors tried to benefit from rivalries among tribal elites to impose their will on tribal populations.

After the appointment of Abdal Agha as chief of the Erciş section of the Haydaran, Ali Agha used every means to reassert his authority. In one personal petitions, he mentioned his service during the Crimean War, underscored how, through his efforts, seventy villages of the district of Abagay had been repopulated by his tribe, and recounted that he had protected the entire district from the Persian tribes who had turned the region into their pasturing grounds. He continued by warning that the division of the Haydaran tribe into two created fear among tribal members and would lead their migration to Persia, which would again turn Abagay into a depopulated district subject to Persian incursions.[664] As with the earlier

[663] BOA, MVL 574/94, 7 Muharrem 75 (August 17, 1858).
[664] BOA, MVL 574/93, 25 R 74 (May 9, 1858).

petitions of the Zilan and Celali, Ali Agha adopted the language and vocabulary of the Tanzimat state in his petition. To legitimize his claims, he asserted that he had never acted contrary to the auspicious Tanzimat.[665]

Resembling the cases of the Zilan and Celali, the border-making process, increasing government intervention in tribal affairs, and disrupted migration patterns led to conflicts within the lineages of chiefs which led to the inevitable split of the tribe into two sections, one in Abagay and the other in Erciş. For a short, Ali Agha managed to remain the sole chief of the Haydaran Confederation by threatening Ottoman authorities with migration to the Persian side of the border. However, beginning in the 1860s, tensions between the two sections were again aggravated.

In 1863, Abdal Agha, the former chief of the Erciş section, and several other members of the Haydaran, wrote a collective petition to the governor of Van requesting their separation from the larger confederation and the appointment of Timur Agha as their director. If accepted, they promised to pay 55 thousand piasters vergü (tax) in addition to the sheep tax. They further promised to register their land through title deeds.[666] The provincial council (*Meclis-i Kebir*) of Van stated that the Haydaran Confederation, upon their settlement in Abagay, had been exempted from certain taxes for three years. Although from Hijra 1276 (1859/1860) onward the tribe had begun to pay 15,000 piasters annually, the provincial treasury benefited little from this amount because Ali Agha was paid a monthly salary of 2000 piasters. Thus, the provincial capital decided to divide the Haydaran Confederation into two administrative units and appoint Timur Agha as the chief of the Erciş section with a

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[665] BOA, MVL 574/93, 25 R 74 (May 9, 1858).
[666] BOA, I.MVL 473/21446, 16 Şaban 79 (February 6, 1863) "*yeddimizde bulunan kaffe araziyi dahi tapuya rabt eylemek ve added-i ağnam rüsûmunu dahi beher sene hüsn-i tadad ettirub ahâli-i sâire misüllü bedelini teslime itina etmek ve mezkûr Erciş ve Sarısu'da aşiretimiz halkı vesâire tarafından bir güne uygunsuzluk ve ahâli ve fukara ve ebna-yı sebil ve sâireye sarkıntılık vukua gelmemesine kemal-i derece itina ve dikkat edub*"

monthly salary of around 500 piasters. The imperial capital approved of this decision,[667] and starting in the 1860s, the Haydaran Confederation was ruled through two administrative units, one in Abagay under the rule of Ali Agha and the other in Erciş (Sarısu) under the rule of Timur Agha. Like in the case of Zilan and Celali, the Ottoman authorities tried to benefit from the rivalry among the chiefs of the tribe to exert control over the tribe.

Another matter regarding the tribes were the taxes imposed on them. During their sedentarization, the Zilan, Celali and Haydaran nomads were all exempted from certain taxes for a three-year period. The logic was simple: taxes imposed on tribes were generally granted as salaries to the tribal chiefs, so provincial governments did not really benefit from the taxes collected from borderland tribes. Early on, the primary concern was winning the loyalty of borderland tribes rather than benefiting from them fiscally. Yet in time, provincial governors gradually increased pressure on the tribes to increase revenues from tribal groups. As stated, the amount of annual tax (vergü) paid by Haydaran nomads was 15,000 piasters in 1857, but Ali Agha received a monthly salary of 2000 piasters. Given its own financial difficulties, the provincial administration of Van decided to increase the taxes of the Haydaran. During a meeting of the provincial council, which Ali Agha also attended, it was argued that the taxes paid by the Haydaran were extremely low compared to their population and wealth. The provincial council decided to increase their taxes to 55,000 piasters, an amount to which Ali Agha agreed. He also agreed to pay the ağnam (sheep tax) and aşâr (tithe) imposed on his tribe.[668]

After leaving the meeting of the provincial council of Van however, Ali Agha together with twenty-nine headmen (muhtar) visited the sanjak of Bayezid, where

[667] BOA, I.MVL 473/21446, 23 Ramazan 1279 (March 14, 1863).
[668] BOA, MVL. 678/117, 21 May 1280 (June 2, 1864).

they submitted a petition to the provincial council of Bayezid regarding the mistreatment of their tribes by the officials of Van. They argued that their tribe had not only protected the district of Abagay from the incursions of Persian tribes but had repopulated seventy abandoned villages in the district since the beginning of their sedentarization. Although they had started to pay taxes after the three-year exemption had lapsed, they did not possess the wealth (*tab ve tahammülü olmadığı*) to pay the newly-imposed 55,000 piasters tax. In their petition, they also demanded exemption from the tithe (aşar) since they had not yet started to engage in agricultural activity. Furthermore, they demanded that as an administrative unit they be assigned to either to Erzurum or Bayezid instead of Van as they were being harassed by the demands of the governors of Van. Finally, if these terms were not fulfilled, they expressed their willingness to migrate to Persia.[669]

Their threat to migrate to Persian territory would not only mean the loss of an entire tribe, but the vulnerability of the district of Abagay to Persian incursions. Indeed, Ali Agha in his petition also warned the imperial capital that if they would migrate to Persia, Abagay would be occupied by Persian authorities.[670] Muhlis Efendi, an Ottoman official, warned about this possibility because, according to him, the Haydarans' migration to Persia would mean the loss of Abagay to the Persians.[671] Consequently, although the administrative status of Abagay was not changed and it remained part of the province of Van, the amount of tax to be paid by the Haydaran

[669] BOA, MVL 678/45, 23 Zilhicce 280 (May 30, 1864).
[670] BOA, MVL 678/45, 23 Zilhicce 280 (May 30, 1864) "*ekrad ve aşâir himayemiz bi'z zurur İran cânibine nakl-i hane ederek mülk sağ saltanat seniyeden Abagay nam mahal İranlu tarafından zabt ve tehmir olunacağı aşikar idüğünden"*
[671] BOA, HR.TO 446/65, "*Eğerce ağa-yı mumaileyh terk-i tabiyet eder ve aşiretini alub Iran tarafına gider ise ne Van mutasarrıflığı ve ne de Bayezid kaimakamlığı tarafından Abaga hududunun tecavüzât-ı Iraniyeden tahlis ve muhafazası mümkün olamayacağı ve havali-ı mezkûrenin dahi ahd-ı karibde Kazlıgöl gibi elden çıkacağı derkâr bulunduğundan keyfiyetin taraf-ı saltanat-ı seniyyeye arz ve işarına himmet buyurmalarını temennü ederim*"

was lowered to 25,000 piasters.[672] Once again, the tribal chiefs had managed to negotiate the terms of their subjecthood with the Ottoman imperial capital. Chiefs of Haydaran not only lowered their taxes, but also established their authority and control on Abagay district.

5.6 Conclusion

By focusing on the cases of three different tribes, this chapter discussed the relations between the Ottoman imperial state and frontier tribes in practice at the local level during the administrative and fiscal transformation of the Ottoman Empire and the delimitation of the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian borders. I discuss how imperial reforms and the projects of the Ottoman Empire were redefined at the local level due to tribal responses and the disputed nature of the Ottoman-Persian borders. Moreover, this chapter discusses how tribes became agents of both the reform and the boundary-making processes. The Ottoman imperial capital, to win the loyalty of the borderland tribes and turn them into frontier settlers, adopted a much more accommodative policy in this landscape at final analysis. This not only changed the nature of the Ottoman state structure on this frontier but also the nature of tribal structures. The Zilan and Celali were divided by the boundaries of the three empires and fragmented into smaller sections, each with its own tribal space and chief. The Haydaran, on the other hand, despite not being fragmented into sections, witnessed fierce rivalry among the members of its ruling family. The most important aspect of this process was that to win the loyalty of the borderland tribes and prevent their allegiance to the Russian or Persian Empires, Ottoman authorities had to confirm the

[672] BOA, ML.VRD.d 2434, 4.

authority of the chiefs over their tribesmen. This, as discussed in the next chapter, resulted in the stratification and territorialization of the tribes.

CHAPTER 6

TERRITORIALIZATION AND STRATIFICATION OF TRIBES

This chapter discusses the territorialization and stratification of the tribes of the northeastern territories of the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the nineteenth century. Following discussions of the subjecthood of the borderland tribes in the 1840s and the 1850s and their gradual "settlement" in the northeastern lands of the Ottoman Empire, tribes became more stratified in terms of their internal organization and structure as well as more territorial in terms of their spatial distribution. That is to say, while chiefs and the ruling family of the tribes became politically more powerful and economically wealthy, each tribe started to have well defined tribal spaces. Territorialization and hierarchy were the result of two gradual developments: first, the increasing integration of the tribal economy, especially sheep farming, into the imperial economy; and second, increasing direct relations between the Ottoman Empire and the tribes (tribal chiefs) which resulted in the delegation of authority to tribal chiefs in matters of taxation and the administration of tribal spaces.

The demand for sheep in the markets of the imperial capital, Aleppo, Damascus, and Egypt intensified struggles over land, especially pasturelands, among tribal groups. It inevitably forced tribes to consolidate in territorial units. The confirmation of the authority of chiefs with respect to the taxation and administration of tribal commoners and the peasantry – especially through the formation of the Hamidian Cavalries and the practice of tax farming- increased the political authority and the wealth of the chiefs and made tribal groups more stratified in terms of their internal structure. The stratification and territorialization of the tribes was went hand

in hand with the intensification of their conflicts with peasants as well as among themselves.

This chapter is accordingly divided in three. The first part focuses on the growing importance of the pastoral economy and the role of the pastoral nomadic tribal communities in it. The second part concerns the increasing contact between the tribes and the Ottoman imperial state from the 1860s to the 1890s. It discusses how tribal chiefs were appointed as director of their tribes, how they managed to became tax farmers, and how they increased their power and wealth after their participation into the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments. The third part presents cases to inter-tribal and tribe-peasant conflicts over pastures, agricultural fields, and villages.

6.1 Pastoral economy in the Ottoman East

In 1901, when the British traveler H.F.B Lynch asked Hüseyin Agha of the Haydaran why they were not cultivating the plain within their tribal domain, "he replied that in the absence of communication and markets they were not encouraged to take such a course."[673] Travelers who visited the provinces of Erzurum and Van in the second half of the nineteenth century noted that large tracts of land were left uncultivated or were used by tribal groups as pasturing grounds for their livestock. Even in the late nineteenth century, despite its potential as a grain exporting region, the absence of roads and means of transport increased the cost of circulating and trading the agricultural surplus beyond the provinces of Erzurum and Van. The first part of this chapter discusses how in such conditions sheep farming turned into a lucrative economy that deeply shaped state-tribe and inter-tribal relations in the second half of the nineteenth century. I argue that because sheep farming turned lucrative, nomads

[673] Lynch, *Armenia Travels and Studies*, 2, 21.

did not adopt an altogether sedentary, agricultural way of life but maintained their nomadic lifestyle with new migration patterns. Moreover, the sheep trade shaped the internal organization of the nomadic tribes, increased the wealth gap between tribal chiefs and lower segments of the tribe and led tribal communities to become increasingly stratified.

During the second half of the nineteenth century sheep farming became one of the most lucrative activity in the local economy for investors, nomads, and peasants of Erzurum and Van. Despite the importance of sheep farming in these provinces, it had not attracted the attention of academics.[674] From production to trade, it attracted various segments of Ottoman society and yielded significant profit to these groups. First, the pasturelands of the Ottoman East provided favorable and sufficient grazing land for large flocks of sheep. Moreover, unlike for agricultural production, sheep trade did not require functioning roads as the sheep could be driven to distant markets. The dominant type of sheep in Erzurum, Kars, Van, and Bitlis during the nineteenth century was broad-tailed sheep known locally as *kızıl karaman*, *mor karaman*, or *Kürd karamanı*.[675] It was raised more for its meat and milk than its wool, and it was known for its ability to adapt to harsh climatic conditions and to walk long distances.[676] Mehmed Hurşid Pasha, who worked as a member of the border commission formed to demarcate the border between the Qajar

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[674] The only exception is the work of Yaşar Tolga Cora, which indicates especially the role of the Armenian notables in the sheep trade of the Erzurum. See Cora, "Transforming Erzurum/Karin." Recently, Yonca Köksal and Mehmet Polatel also discuss how pastoral nomadic tribes of Central Anatolia was crucially important in supplying the meat demand of Istanbul. See Köksal and Polatel, "A Tribe as an Economic Actor."

[675] Umur-ı Baytariye Müdiriyeti, *Koyun Yetiştirmek ve Bakmak Usulu*, 8. *"Kızıl Karamanlara Kürd Karamanı, Mor Karaman isimleri dahi tesmiye veriliyor. Bu hayvanat ale'l ekser Van, Bitlis ve Erzurum vilayetlerinde yetişdiriliyor."* See also Consul General Sweeney, "Sheep and Wool in Asiatic Turkey," 98.

[676] Umur-ı Baytariye Müdüriyeti, Müdiriyeti, *Koyun Yetiştirmek ve Bakmak Usulu*. See also FO 78/703, Henry H. Calvent, Notes on the Topography, Trade and Manufactures, Agriculture, Climate and Natural History of the Pashalık of Erzurum, April 30, 1847.

and Ottoman Empires in the 1850s, argued that sheep bred by the nomadic Celali tribe adapted themselves to harsh environmental conditions. They could obtain fodder in pastures by digging the snow even during the winters.[677] These peculiarities made sheep an important local product, and trade good as well as source of conflict in the nineteenth century.

Export tables of the provinces of Erzurum and Van from the second half of the nineteenth century reveal that it was not agricultural production but sheep by which the local economy was integrated into distant imperial markets. During the nineteenth century, great numbers of sheep were exported from the provinces of Erzurum and Van to internal markets, especially to the imperial capital, Aleppo, Damascus, and even more distant places like Egypt and Malta. The sheep of Van, in particular, were mostly exported to Aleppo and from there to Egypt and sometimes to Malta. Ottoman sources also indicate that, sheep were also exported to Russia from Erzurum and Çıldır, although few in number and only in certain periods in time.

As Cora argues, existing studies on the operations of the sheep trade largely confine themselves to the provisioning of meat to the imperial capital, particularly to the *celebkeşan* system.[678] What is more, such studies have been directed to the Balkans, and there is a lacuna in the research on the sheep trade in the Ottoman East. Early nineteenth-century sources provide episodic information about these operations and include orders from the imperial capital regarding its meat demand, orders from

[677] Mehmed Hurşid, *Seyâhatnâme-ı Hudud*., p. 263, Indeed, Khazanov argues that while sheep can pasture grass covered with 15-17 centimeters, horses can get at fodder in pasture covered with snow up to 30-40, sometimes 50 centimeters deep. See; Khazanov, *Nomads and Outside World*.
[678] Cora, "Transforming Erzurum/Karin," 235. For studies focusing on celebkeşan system, see Greenwood, “Istanbul’s Meat Provisioning.”; Uzun, *İstanbul’un İaşesinde Devletin Rolü*.

the army during the military operations, and the petitions of sheep traders complaining about double taxation while driving their sheep to the internal market.

Despite the irregularity of the information, early sources indicate that large numbers of sheep were sometimes exported from the region upon orders from imperial capital or the initiative of merchants. When ordered by the imperial capital, they were generally bought at a predetermined price (*miri bedel*) that was lower than market value.[679] In 1800, the imperial capital demanded 50 thousand sheep from the Merdisi tribe of Erzurum, yet a shortage of sheep on the frontier prevented the conveyance of this number.[680] In 1832, an Ottoman source mentions 42,500 sheep sent from Erzurum to the imperial capital to fulfill the needs of the army. The same source indicates that this amount was purchased directly from merchants of Erzurum and Aleppo who had already amassed great numbers of sheep from the markets of Erzurum with the intention of sending them to Syria.[681]

Ahmed Uzun states that Balkan lands remained as one of the main regions of the Empire in the provisioning the meat demand of the Ottoman imperial capital from fifteenth to nineteenth century. Yet, increasing urban population, the wars and other political and military developments of the eighteenth century increased the demand for sheep in imperial capital. Thus, imperial authorities during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries encouraged and sometimes forced merchants and pastoral tribes to draw the sheep of Anatolian provinces to imperial capital.[682] Various nomadic tribes of Anatolian provinces provided large amounts of sheep for the meat demand of imperial capital. Köksal and Polatel note that in 1800, the Cihanbeyli tribe of the Central Anatolia "were required to send 80,000 sheep, a number that

[679] BOA, C.AS 728/30553, 1240, (1825).
[680] BOA, C.BLD 5/213, 22 C 215 (November 10, 1800).
[681] BOA, HAT 351/19883, 3 C 1248, (October 28, 1832).
[682] Uzun, *İstanbul'un İaşesinde Devletin Rolü*, 20.

increased to 100,000 in 1835 and to 120,000 in the 1840s." [683] Such an increasing demand for sheep also affected its production in Ottoman East.

In the mid-nineteenth century, sources were more elaborate and provide further clues about the circulation of sheep in the internal markets of the empire. Among these internal markets, Syria and especially Aleppo turned into an important center for the sheep trade. In the late 1830s, Aleppo consumed 55-60 thousand sheep annually; of this amount, 20 thousand came directly from Erzurum.[684] In coming decades, Aleppo continued to demand sheep from Erzurum and Van. As early as 1870, Consul Taylor noted the progressive trend of sheep farming for the local economy, had attracted Syrian, Egyptian, and European merchants as well as the townspeople of Erzurum who were investing 200 thousand pounds sterling annually in their production and trade.[685] The merchants of Aleppo and Damascus in particular visited the markets and pasturing grounds of Erzurum and Van in the spring, bought sheep, and drove them to the markets. Likewise, merchants from Van established headquarters in Aleppo from which to operate the sheep trade between Van and Syrian cities.[686] Ottoman sources also indicate that Russian and Persian merchants were active in the sheep trade between Erzurum and Aleppo.[687]

However, like agricultural production, the sheep trade had several risks. Wars, contagious diseases, the availability of pastures in trade destination, climate

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[683] Köksal and Polatel, "A Tribe as an Economic Actor.", 104.
[684] Bowring, *Report on the Commercial Statistics of Syria*, 16. For a discussion on meat consumption of Damascenes in the eighteenth century, see; Grehan, *Everyday Life and Consumer Culture*, 98-102 An increasing demand of sheep in Aleppo, Damascus and Cairo might have related with agrarian changes in these regions. Commercialization of agricultural production, opening of more lands for cultivation might have diminished the number of livestock production in these regions and as a result increased dependency to outside. I would like to thank Yaşar Tolga Cora in reminding me this point.
[685] "Report by Consul Taylor, on the Trade and Sheep and Cattle Farming of the Consulate of Koordistan during the Year 1870," 1076. See also "Report by Consul Taylor on the Trade of Koordistan during the Year 1871," 1347.
[686] FO. Annual Series, "Report for the Year 1891 on the Trade of the District of Erzeroum," 8.
[687] BOA, HR.SYS 1239/105.

change, and theft during transport resulted in several calamities.[688] In 1866, a certain Hacı Ali, a merchant from Damascus, bought 24,500 sheep from Erzurum to sell in Egypt, but realized that the entire flock was infected with fascioliasis. He abandoned the entire flock in Egypt and visited the imperial capital to argue that he had no ability to compensate the losses of the other shareholders and demanded restitution of the loses.[689] During the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-78, a Russian merchant in Aleppo, Serbos Agaviyan, bought 7500 sheep from Erzurum through intermediaries to sell in Aleppo, but he was unable to drive them out of the province because of the demand of army for the meat. He demanded that Ottoman authorities buy his sheep at a fair price.[690] Wars also resulted in losses of animals, thus affecting the operations of the sheep trade. In 1872, the total number of sheep in the sanjak of Bayezid was recorded as 300 thousand. Yet in 1882, sources indicate it was recorded as only 143,082. If these statistics are accurate, almost half of the livestock was lost during the war, which would deeply affect the sheep trade in coming years.[691] Security was another risk that merchants took into consideration. In 1906, merchants from Aleppo, Damascus, and Urfa appealed to the imperial capital and requested a military escort for safe travel from the region. The petitioners argued that they had bought 40 thousand sheep in Van and its environs yet were losing money to thefts taking place during their transport.[692]

Sheep production was carried out by various segments of society – by pastoral nomads in the pasturelands, by merchants who contracted the nomads or rented them pastures, and by local peasants. In districts like Van and Bayezid, this

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[688] "Report by Mr. Consul Taylor on the Trade and Condition of the Vilayet of Erzeroom and Eyalet of Kharput and Diarbekr, composing the Consular District of Koordistan, for the Year 1866," 570.
[689] BOA, MVL 517/67, 5 Receb 1283, (November 13, 1866).
[690] BOA, HR.SYS 1239/105 (1877).
[691] FO 195/1450, Vice Consul Eyre, "Commercial Report of the Vilayet of Erzeroum, June 30, 1883.
[692] BOA, BEO 2917/218748, 7 Ağustos 1322, (August 20, 1906).

trade was mostly under the sway of the nomadic tribes, and peasants engaged little in the production of sheep because of the insecurity of the market. Cora mentions three modes of sheep trade in the Ottoman East.[693] In the first, merchants visited the pastoral nomads of the region themselves, bought the sheep, and drove them to market. In the second, nomadic merchants brought the sheep to markets where they sold the livestock to the merchants. The third was the *kome* system wherein capital owners rented pasturelands and produced for the market. Cora adds that among these methods, the latter two were practiced in Erzurum, but the first was mostly peculiar to Van. [694] Furthermore, there were nomads who brought their animals directly to the markets in Aleppo.[695]

Consul Taylor provided elaborate information about the practice of the kome system in which investors rented a parcel of pastureland that afforded enough grazing for a specific number of sheep during the spring and summer.[696] A contract was then signed between the merchant and the shepherd. The shepherd and his family was responsible for the care of the animals, including their grazing, milking, access to mineral licks, and other requirements. Taylor gave a detailed account of the nature of this contract. Shepherds received no wages but took a share of newborn lambs and wool, was housed in a cottage and given land, and was allowed to graze 10 of his own sheep for every 100 of the investor's sheep on the rented pasture. The investor, in return, received butter, cheese, and wool in addition to most newborn lambs to be sold in the market.[697] For 800 head of sheep, the cost of raising them for

[693] Cora, "Transforming Erzurum/Karin," 238-241.
[694] Cora, "Transforming Erzurum/Karin," 238-241.
[695] Lynch, *Armenia Travels and Studies,* 2, 184.
[696] "Report by Consul Taylor, on the Trade and Sheep and Cattle Farming of the Consulate of Koordistan during the Year 1870." 1076-86
[697] "Report by Consul Taylor, on the Trade and Sheep and Cattle Farming of the Consulate of Koordistan during the Year 1870."

three years was 400 pounds sterling. At the beginning of the fourth year, the investor would make a profit of 600 pounds sterling. Taylor described the deal between a merchant and shepherd as follows:

> Shepherd annually receives
>
> For every 20 sheep, 1 lamb.
> For every 20 lambs born, also 1 lamb.
> For every 20 full-grown sheep, 1 gote (1/2 bushel) of wheat and the same of barley.
> The wool of all lambs up to 12 months old.
> A piece of ground rent free, capable of bring sown with 3 quarters of wheat.
> A cottage rent free.
> For every 100 sheep in his charge he is also allowed to keep 10 of his own on the proprietor's land free of all charge.
>
> In return, the shepherd gives the sheep-owner yearly, on every four sheep
>
> 6 okes = 16 lbs. 7oz. of butter.
> „ „ of cheese.
> The lambs born after deducting his perquisite noted before.
> All the wool of the animals above 12 months of age.
> Tending, milking, churning, cheese making, washing, shearing, and doctoring at his expense also.

What Consul Taylor defined as the kome system was a widespread practice in the second half of the nineteenth century in the province of Erzurum. However, such deals were not simply between merchants and shepherds; they were a practice among various segments of Ottoman as well as Persian society even before the mid nineteenth century. Despite reminds a “feudal relation” in its practice, in the Khanate of Revan before 1827, nomadic tribes had to graze a certain amount of sheep of the Hussein Quli Khan in grazing grounds. Nikitine notes that the khan secured the right to take back the same amount of sheep and lamb in any coming year. For each sheep however, the khan received annually 1⁄2 batman [around 5 kilos in Erevan] of butter and cheese and one stil [1/30 of batman] of wool from each young sheep, yet the

offspring went to the nomads. [698] Early population surveys of Erzurum recorded the presence of numerous nomadic families in villages distant from their traditional pasturing grounds and winter quarters. In some surveys, these tribal members were registered as shepherds of either a village or a certain individual.[699] Even today, such deals are made between shepherds and peasants in Kars and Erzurum.

Nevertheless, tribal groups owned the largest numbers of sheep. The Zilan tribe owned almost 100 thousand sheep before the occupation of Revan by the Russian Empire in 1827, and taxes paid by the tribe were mostly related to their pastoral production.[700] Averyanov notes that about 450 families from Kurdish tribes who remained in Russian territory following the Ottoman Russian War of 1828-29 were sedentarized along the left bank of the Aras river had about 52 thousand sheep, 6 thousand head of cattle, and 1 thousand horses.[701] Before 1827, the tribe of Celali in the Khanate of Revan owned 51.700 sheep.[702] Likewise, the Haydaran tribe owned 300 thousand sheep during the early nineteenth century.[703] For ensuing decades, no sources indicate the number of sheep owned by the tribes of the frontier as the tribes did not allow government officials to count them because it affected the assessment of their taxes. Despite patchy information regarding the count, consular reports emphasized that tribal groups were important suppliers of sheep to internal markets of the empire.

Whichever method was used, sheep production was one of the most lucrative activities of the nineteenth century in the provinces of Erzurum and Van. In 1863,

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[698] Nikitine, *Les Kurdes; Etude Sociologique et Historique*, 143.
[699] BOA, C.DH 193/9608, *"kaza-i mezkura [Şuragel] tabi' Magazberd kışlasında kışlakçı bulunan Paşa Bey'in çobanları"* See also; BOA, NFS.d 2764, 42
[700] Nikitine, *Les Kurdes; Etude Sociologique et Historique*. 143.
[701] Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, 99.
[702] Şopen, *İstoriçeskiy pamyatnik sostoyaniya Armyanskoy-oblasti v epohu yeya prisoyedineniya k Rossiyskoy İmperii*.
[703] BOA, C.DH 24/1196, 1218 L 17, (January 30, 1804).

Taylor noted, merchants from Aleppo bought sheep for 32 piasters a head from the Kurdish nomads of Erzurum and Diyarbekir and sold them for 80 to 85 piasters in Aleppo. The cost of transport, including hiring shepherds to drive animals, causalities, taxes, and other payments came to 25 piasters a head, leaving 25-30 piasters of profit per sheep for the merchant.[704]

The earliest statistics concerning the sheep trade of the province of Erzurum are British consular reports dating to the 1880s. However, these were based on information that the consuls collected from merchants working in Erzurum, not on customs records. As noted by British Consul Herbert Chermside, a merchant from Bayburt could trade directly with Trabzon and a merchant from Bayezid could export sheep to Russia without these appearing in the tables.[705] Though incomplete, these accounts give an idea of the circulation of sheep (See Figure 8). In 1884, the value of sheep exported from the province mounted to 46,360 pounds sterling (5,099,600 piasters).[706] In 1908, this reached almost to 98,000 pounds sterling (10,780,000 piasters) for some 200 thousand sheep.[707] These values illuminate the importance of sheep farming for the local and imperial economy at a time when there was little trade of the agricultural surplus in the province.

Sheep exports depended on several variables. The supply of Kurdish nomads from the Persian side of the border, animal diseases, political circumstances, famines, and widespread theft all affected the sheep export business. The increase in exports in 1885 was related to the import of some 15 thousand sheep from Kurdish tribes on the Persian side of the border. A sharp decrease in the number of sheep

[704] "Report by Mr. Consul Taylor on the Trade of Diarbekr and Kurdistan for the Year 1863," 180.
[705] FO. Annual Series, "Report for the years 1887-88 on the Trade of the District of Erzeroum," 1.
[706] FO. Annual Series, "Report for the year 1885 on the Trade of the District of Erzeroum," 3.
[707] FO. Annual Series, "Report for the year 1908 on the Trade of the Consular District of Erzeroum," 10.

exported from the region was evident in 1888, however. This may have been related to disease. That same year, Russian authorities banned the import of sheep from the district of Erzurum stating that a widespread pandemic was taking place among Anatolian sheep.[708] From 1888 to 1893, sheep exports gradually increased, reaching a total of 95 thousand pounds sterling by 1893. Starting in 1894, however, general insecurity prevailed in the region, and anti-Armenian violence resulted in a gradual decrease in the number of sheep and amount of other commodities being exported from the province.[709]

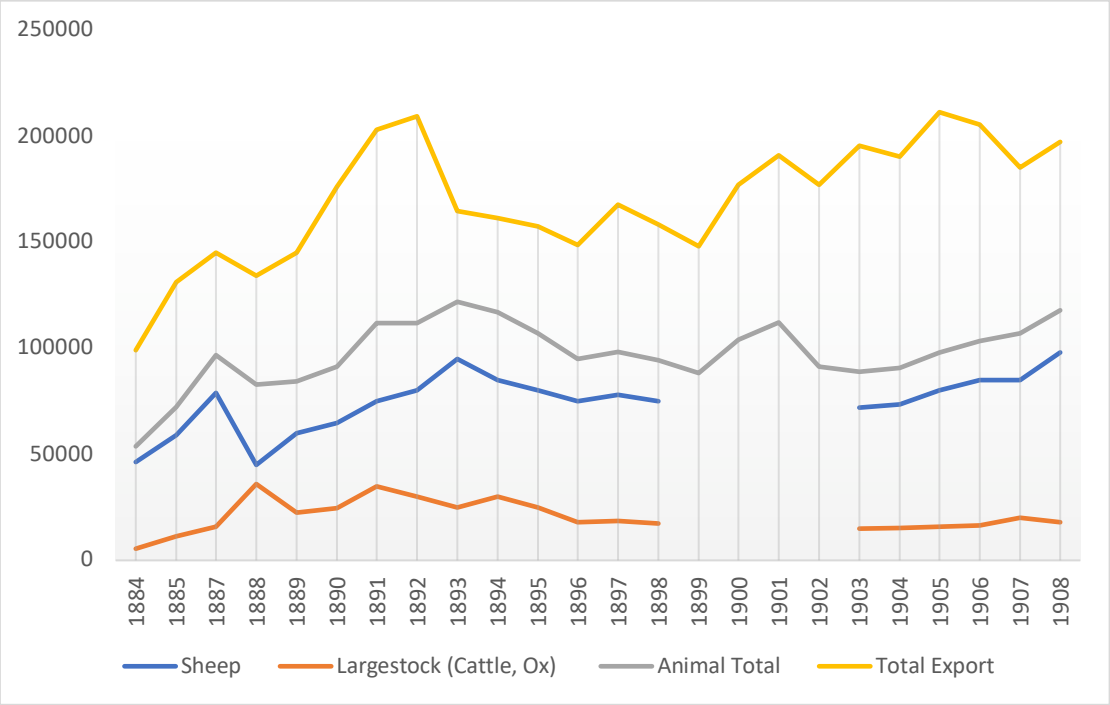

Figure 8. Livestock export[710] from Erzurum in pounds sterling
Source: [FO. Annual Series, No. 30, 192, 212, 386, 527, 930, 1050, 1242, 1271, No 1426, 1608, 1821, 1976, 2163, 2233, 2477, 2657, 2792, 3003, 3224, 3442, 3652, 3851, 4115, 4389, (1884-1908)]

[708] BOA, DH.MKT1601/61, 13 Şubat 1304, (February 25, 1889).
[709] For anti-Armenian riots in Diyarbakır, see Verheij, "Diyarbekir and Armenian Crises of 1895." And in Harput Sipahi, "Narrative Construction in the 1895 Massacres in Harput"
[710] Though being defined as export in sources, it should be noted that sheep transactions included both domestic (internal) as well as international trade.

British consular reports emphasized that between 40 and 200 thousand sheep were exported from the province of Van annually in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (See Figure 9 for the sheep export from Van in pounds sterling). The number may have been more, since many merchants established direct relationships with nomads in the pasturelands beyond the intelligence of the British consuls. Indeed, unlike in the province of Erzurum, sheep husbandry in Van was exclusively carried out by Kurdish tribes. During the springs, merchants from Aleppo and Damascus visited the camps of the Kurdish nomads, bought sheep from them directly, and exported them to Aleppo, Egypt, and sometimes Malta. Likewise, merchants from Van established headquarters in Aleppo. Export numbers suggest that the conditions that affected the sheep trade in Erzurum also influenced that of Van. There is no information about the trade of sheep in 1895 and 1896 at the peak of the anti-Armenian violence, likely induced by the events as Armenian merchants were important agents of trade in the region.[711]

[711] For the role of Armenian merchants in the sheep trade of Erzurum, see Cora, "Transforming Erzurum/Karin," 238-243.

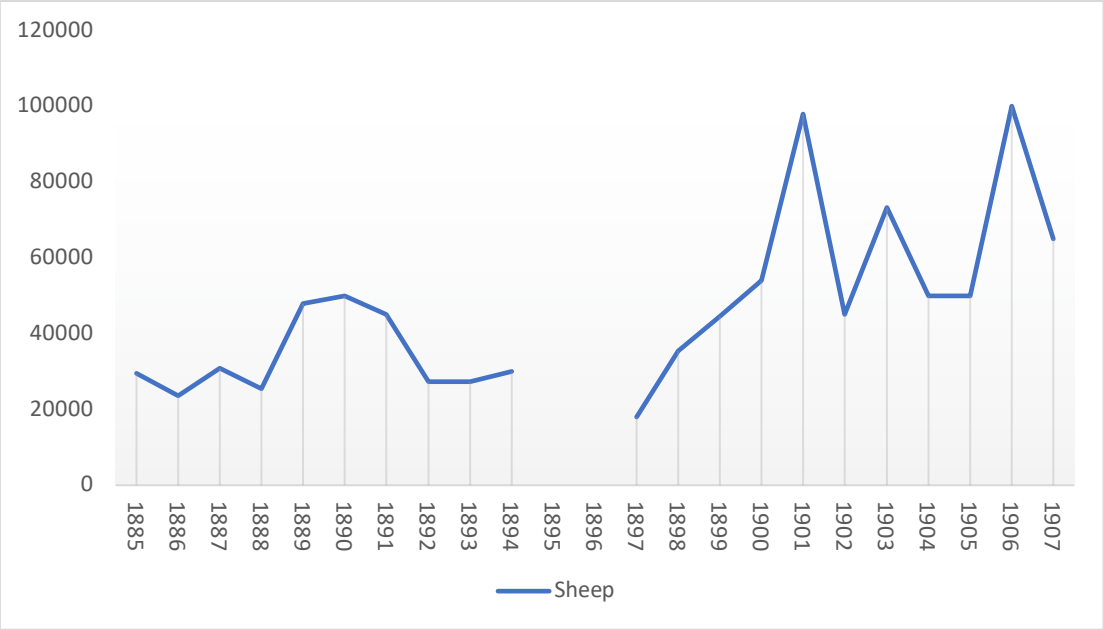

Figure 9. Sheep export from Van in pounds sterling
Source: [Foreign Office, Annual Series; No. 30, 192, 212, 386, 527, 930, 1050, 1242, 1271, No 1426, 1608, 1821, 1976, 2163, 2233, 2477, 2657, 2792, 3003, 3224, 3442, 3652, 3851, 4115, 4389, (1885-1908)]

A similar trend in wool exports is not evident in the export tables. None of the consular reports included wool as an important commodity exported from the provinces of Van and Erzurum. Likewise, the amount of wool exported from the port of Trabzon was low compared to the ports of Alexandretta, Baghdad, and Basra, from which great amounts were exported to the United States, France, and England. Only 280 pounds sterling of wool was exported from the port of Trabzon in 1905. In Aleppo, through the port of Alexandretta, the corresponding amount in the same year was 145,365 pounds sterling for 2321 tons of wool.[712] This is because wool produced in Erzurum and Van was mostly for local consumption to make clothes, tents, *kilim*s, and other daily goods. Besides, there was no demand in world markets

[712] FO. Annual Series, "Report for the year 1905 on the Trade and Commerce of the Vilayet of Aleppo," 20.

for the wool of the broad tailed sheep (mor karaman breed) of these provinces, as it was rougher than other types. In 1891, Consul General Sweeney argued that

> In Asia Minor the quality of the wool in each district seems to be influenced by the climatic and topographical conditions of the country. Thus, the wool of the flocks of sheep of the plains of Mesopotamia, and which belong to the Arabs (these people inhabit the whole of the valley of the southern Tigris and are divided into achirets, or tribes, to whom belong the flocks of sheep), and which pass the winter outside, owing to the mild climate of the country, is of much finer and cleaner quality than the wool of the flocks of the north viz, of the province of Koordistan, where the severe winter obliges shepherds to keep their sheep under peculiar roofs, which are called *aghel* in Turkish and are always inadequate to cover the numerous animals, which very often lie in dirt, and thus the wool is deteriorated to a great extent.[713]

Not only merchants but also the imperial treasury greatly benefitted from sheep farming. In addition to the tithe and tax (vergü), taxes collected on sheep constituted an important portion of provincial revenues. In 1870-71, the total number of sheep (rams, ewes, lambs) in the province of Erzurum was recorded as 1,718,784.[714] That same year, the taxes collected from sheep owners amounted to 53,628 pounds sterling, and it reached 99,227 pounds sterling by 1876.[715] There was a sharp decrease following the annexation of Kars by the Russian Empire and the redefinition of the sanjak of Van as an independent province. The sheep taxes collected in Van in 1877-78 were recorded as 2,366,975 piasters. In 1906, taxes were paid on 733,338 sheep. Yet, according to British consuls, the number of sheep in Van was as many as three million. Since tribal chiefs – not government officials – assessed the numbers themselves, they concealed the true numbers to avoid taxes.[716]

The rise of sheep farming and trade as one of the most profitable occupations in the region deeply influenced tribal organization as well as inter-tribal and tribe-

[713] Consul General Sweeney, "Sheep and Wool in Asiatic Turkey," 97.
[714] Salnâme-i Vilayet-i Erzurum, 1288 (1871-1872), 57.
[715] Foreign Office 881/4084, Report by Mr. E. F. Harrison on the Finances of Turkey, 1880, 36.
[716] FO. Annual Series, "Report for the year 1906 on the Trade of the Consular District of Erzeroum," 8.

peasant relations. As it generated great revenue, tribal nomads sought to increase the number of sheep in their flocks. Large flocks required mobility, and mobility required large pasturelands. From the 1870s onward, struggles over major pasturelands became a defining feature of inter-tribal relations. The Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran tribes and their former affiliates of various size and organization engaged in endless struggles to control the main pasturing grounds of the region. The result of inter-tribal struggles over the pasturing grounds of Aladağ, Abagay, Tuji, Sinekî, Tendürek, and the slopes of Mount Ağrı was the territorialization of the tribes; that is, each tribe came to occupy discrete spaces reserved for their winter settlement and summer pasturing.

Janet Klein argues that the centralizing policies of the Ottoman Empire and the emergence of a capitalist world market paved the way for the transformation of nomadic tribes into settled cultivators. According to her, agrarian capitalism made land more valuable; nomads thus gradually settled and engaged in agricultural production as tenants or sharecroppers.[717] My intent is not to contradict this claim. Land clearly turned into an important commodity during the late nineteenth century, one over which tribes engaged in fierce competition. However, it was hardly to produce cash crops. The main agricultural activity was directed to produce grain, mostly wheat and barley. And, it was mostly used for local consumption and for the need of the animals during the winters.

Sources indicate that the nomads of the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire – despite having been allocated villages – did not altogether adopt an agricultural way of life. Instead, they adopted a semi-nomadic or transhumant lifestyle, migrating between their pasturing grounds and villages. Moreover, this

[717] Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, 135.

settlement pattern was not because of the development of agrarian capitalism but the consequence of other factors including the relative difficulty of mass migration over political borders starting in the 1850s. Besides, the lucrativeness of sheep farming discouraged many nomad families from becoming permanent settlers and agricultural cultivators, a fact that was also true for Central Anatolian nomads. Halil Inalcık argues that the persistence of nomadism in Central Anatolia and of transhumance in Eastern Anatolia was because "stock raising was the most profitable and rational exploitation of the land."[718] As late as 1901, British Consul Lamb listed Kurdish tribes of the region, including the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran and many of their subsections, as nomadic rather than settled.[719]

Otto Blau's observations of the Kurdish Celali and Haydaran tribes contain valuable information about the patterns of pastoralism adopted by these tribes in the mid-nineteenth century.[720] He argues that after quickly cultivating the land, all the inhabitants of Kurdali, a village inhabited by the Haydaran tribe, would migrate to pasturing grounds in the mountains and valleys in summer. Blau notes that the cultivation was primarily for the requirements of the animals in winter. He also argues that their difference from Armenian peasants was that while the Kurdish tribes would move together as a community to the mountains and valleys in search of pasturing grounds, Armenian peasants mostly used the pastures around their villages for their animals.[721]

Nomadic families on the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire were indeed allocated villages for their settlement, and many built houses for their accommodation or expelled villagers and appropriated their houses. While tribal

[718] İnalcık, "The Ottoman State: Economy and Society, 1300-1600," 160-161.
[719] Foreign Office 424/203, Consul Lamb to Sir N. O'Conor, Erzeroom, 31 December 1901.
[720] Blau, "Die Stamme des Nordöstlishen Kurdistan," 95.
[721] Blau, "Die Stamme des Nordöstlishen Kurdistan." 95.

groups treated pasturelands as common property, houses, agricultural land, and meadows began to be registered individually. Ottoman sources indicate that at the turn of the twentieth century, it was primarily the families of chiefs that held large tracts of agricultural land in addition to pasturing grounds, having either received the title deeds or occupying them illegally.[722] Nevertheless, animal husbandry continued to occupy the largest share of tribal as well as the regional economy. And until the early twentieth century, the engagement of tribal commoners in agricultural production was overwhelmingly for local consumption and for the needs of animals in winter rather than for trade on the market.

6.2 Territorialization and stratification of the tribes

The commercialization of pastoral production together with the confirmation of the authority of tribal chiefs over tribal commoners made tribal groups more hierarchical and territorial compared to previous decades, which is not to say that the tribes of this region had been egalitarian in their social, economic, and political organization before the mid-nineteenth century. But these two processes widened the gap between tribal chiefs and tribal commoners as well as between tribal chiefs and the local peasantry living in tribal spaces. As discussed in the previous chapter, the attempts of the Ottoman and Persian Empires to transform the tribes into imperial subjects and to benefit from them militarily and fiscally led to bargains between tribal chiefs and imperial states. Many borderland nomads of the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran submitted to Ottoman subjecthood, a process which also resulted in imperial recognition of the authority of chiefs over tribal commoners. Given the exemptions and flexibility granted to tribal groups in matters of taxation and military service,

[722] Polatel, "Armenians and the Land Question," 232-233.

Ottoman authorities rarely applied physical force to control these tribes. Consequently, chiefs benefitted from such circumstances peculiar to the borderland to increase their wealth and political power in coming decades.

From the late 1850s onward, the Haydaran gradually consolidated their power along the northern shores of Lake Van, an area stretching from the Persian frontier in the east to Malazgird in the west. Otto Blau, who visited the region in 1850s, noted that the entire area had been given to the Haydaran tribe for their sedentarization. According to him, the tribe was divided into two. While a western division of 1000 tents dominated Erciş and the neighboring districts, the eastern division was located near the Persian border.[723] In Chapter 5 it has already been discussed how the chiefs of the eastern and western divisions of the Haydaran, Abdal and Ali Aghas, engaged in fierce struggle to establish authority over the Haydaran by engaging in various deals with state circles.

The case of the Haydaran is a good example of how a tribe of the region transformed itself into a territorial, stratified tribe. From the 1850s onward, the Haydaran established authority and control over the Abagay region, a pasturing ground favorable for animal husbandry located to the northeast of Van. The chief of the tribe, Ali Agha, allowed neither the Ottoman state to establish direct rule in the district nor other tribes like the Celali to use it as a pasturing ground without permission. Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, the provincial administration of Van attempted to establish direct rule in the region to provide security, facilitate tax collection, and increase tax revenues. In 1871, a military barrack was built for the accommodation of soldiers in the village of Dergizer, but it

[723] Blau, "Die Stamme des Nordöstlishen Kurdistan." A description of the tribes of this region was also drawn by William Spottiswoode in 1863, which contain great similarities with the work of Otto Blau. See Spottiswoode, "Sketch of the Tribes of Northern Kurdistan."

was demolished by the Haydaran tribe as it was a clear symbol of government authority in the region.[724]

In 1871, a report (*layiha*) from the province of Van addressed various issues related to the province's tribal groups including their taxation, administration, and organization. The report reveals that the chiefs of the tribes of Van had been given almost exclusive rights and responsibilities with respect to the taxation and administration of tribal commoners. The governor paid a special attention to the district of Abagay used by a segment of the Haydaran;

> It is necessary to relate that the sub-district of Abagay has a highly fruitful and expansive land that is unique not only in this region but in all of Iran and Turan. However, unfortunately, the sheep tax of such a sub-district is contracted out for thirty-four to thirty-five thousand piasters and its tithe is four to five thousand piasters for themselves. Another fifty thousand piasters was imposed as tax, but most of it is rotting in arrears… Regarding the taxes of the tribes, it is low and will never increase under such conditions. And [tribal leaders] are taking the coins earned by the tribal people, and so they are becoming wealthy and are luxuriating, leaving the tribal people in poverty and need. Neither tribal administrators nor tribal elites (*torun*) pay a cent, imposing all their taxes and the sheep tax on the tribal people. And all of them have lots of livestock and they trade tremendous numbers of sheep per annum. [725]

According to the report, the Abagay section of the Haydaran tribe paid 34 thousand piasters of sheep tax (two piasters per sheep), 4-5 thousand piasters of tithe (aşâr), and 50 thousand tax (vergi) annually. The collection of these taxes was contracted to Ali Ağa, the chief of the Abagay section of the Haydaran tribe. Yet according to the report, the taxes paid by the tribe were low compared to their actual wealth and power. A fair assessment of the wealth of the Abagay section of Haydaran would bring 200 thousand piasters of revenue into the provincial treasury annually. Second,

[724] BOA, ŞD 1877/63, 8 Eylül 1305 (September 20, 1889). Such actions of the Haydaran seems to be supported by frontier Qajar authorities, since from the perspective of the Persians Abagay was a contested land between Ottoman and Persian empires. See BOA, HR.MKT 716/65, 4 Agustos 1287 (August 16, 1871). and BOA, HR.MKT 716/70, 24 Temmuz 1287 (August 5, 1871).
[725] BOA, Y.EE 33/5, 1287 (1871), See Appendix E for the Ottoman Turkish version of the text.

the report underscored that the chiefs and notables of the tribes of Van did not pay their own taxes but put the burden on the shoulders of tribal members, causing their impoverishment. At the cost of the poverty of their own tribal members, these same chiefs enlarged their flocks of sheep, made their trade, and greatly augmented their wealth.[726]

Ottoman authorities avoided physical force against tribal groups as this would led to their migration to Persia, and allegiance to the Persian Empire would undoubtedly increase Persian claims to the district of Abagay, which as stated in the previous chapter was disputed between the two empires. Such conditions not only resulted in the territorialization of the tribe, but also widened the gap between tribal chiefs and commoners.

In the 1880s, reports from the province of Van informed the imperial capital that the Haydaran tribe was resisting population and property surveys, refusing the authority of the provincial administration, not paying taxes, and not allowing government authorities to establish a telegraph line in the region. The same source also indicates that despite possessing more than 30 thousand sheep, the chief of the Haydaran only allowed 12 thousands of them to be taxed.[727] In late 1889, the governor of Van proposed to reclassify the administrative status of the district to better control it. As stated before, successive chiefs of the Haydaran had been appointed as district governor (*mudir*) responsible for the taxation and administration of the region. Since tax revenues from the region were low, he proposed moving the administrative center of the district of Bargiri to a village in the center of the Abagay district as well as constructing a government building (*hükümet konağı*) and military

[726] BOA, Y.EE 33/5, 1287 (1871).
[727] BOA, ŞD 1877/63, 15 Şubat 1300 (February 27, 1885).

barracks for the accommodation of soldiers there in order to increase the amount of taxes collected and bring security to the region.[728]

In the ensuing decades, several attempts by the provincial administration to establish direct control in the region failed, and the government generally conceded the authority of the chiefs to collect taxes and administer the region. The chiefs of the tribe, benefiting from their strategic location, repeatedly threatened to migrate to Persia and subject to Persian subjecthood. The chiefs of the Haydaran tribe collected the sheep tax from its tribal members but directed little of to the provincial treasury, keeping the remaining revenue for themselves. Such political authority enabled them to increase the size of their flocks of sheep. As noted, 30-40 thousand sheep were exported from Abagay to Aleppo, Damascus, and Egypt annually.[729] This trade was mostly under the control of the chiefs of the Haydaran who even rented the pasturelands of Abagay to other tribes. For instance, the Celalis were making payments to the chiefs of the Haydaran to use these pasturelands, and in coming decades the region of Abagay would witness fierce competition between these two tribes.[730] As the Abagay region became the exclusive tribal space of the Haydaran, the same process contributed to the widening gap between its chiefs and its commoners.

The favorable conditions available to the chiefs of the Haydaran were clearly not available to the Zilan. Near the Russian border, the pastoral habitat of the Zilan had been a militarized frontier of the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires since the 1820s. Territorial shifts, the disruption of pastoral habitat, and increasing state intervention resulted in the fragmentation of the Zilan in the long run. But, despite

[728] BOA, ŞD 1877/63, 8 Eylül 305 (September 20, 1889).
[729] BOA, Y.PRK.BŞK 18/81, 30 Haziran 1306 (July 12, 1890).
[730] BOA, ŞD 1877/63, 8 Eylül 1305 (September 20, 1889).

fragmented each of its former sub-divisions also became highly territorial and stratified. Groups including the Cemaldini, Kaskî, and Cunukî, who were formerly part of the Zilan, became independent units with their own chiefs and tribal spaces. The Cemaldinî under the leadership of Ali and Mustafa Aghas, the Kaskî under the leadership of Pertev Bey, the Cunukî under the leadership of Nebi Agha officially recognized by the Ottoman imperial capital as independent tribal units and granted separate tribal spaces. The Kaskî were given land in Kars, the Cemaldini in Şuragel, the Zilan in Kağızman, and the Cunukî in Köroğlu. The chiefs of the Kaskî and Cemaldini tribes were given monthly salaries of 500 piasters.[731] In 1865, the taxes (vergü) paid by the Zilan, Kaskî, and Cemaldini tribes amounted to 51 thousand, 26 thousand, and 6 thousand piasters, respectively.[732] As in the case of the Haydaran, the chiefs of former affiliates of the Zilan were given authority in matters of taxation and administration in their tribal districts.

Some sections of the Zilan occupied the Russian territory of Erevan, entered Russian suzerainty, and integrated into Russian military and administrative structures. Cafer Ağa, who was leader of the segments of the Zilan in Russia, died in 1876 and was succeeded by his son Eyüp Pasha. Under both the tribe was integrated into the local cavalry regiments of Erevan.[733] During the Ottoman- Russian war of 1877-1878, Eyüp Pasha along with several families of the Zilan migrated into Ottoman territory and demanded land for himself and his tribesmen.[734] Eyüp Pasha was settled in Malazgirt even though his tribesmen were spread among Ottoman Bayezid and Eleşgirt and Russian Kars.

[731] BOA, ŞD 1877/63, 8 Eylül 1305 (September 20, 1889).
[732] BOA, I.MVL 544/24447, 23 Teşrin-i sani 1281 (December 5, 1865).
[733] BOA, Y.A RES 4/74, 2 Teşrin-i evvel 1295 (October 14, 1879).
[734] BOA, Y.A RES 4/74, 2 Teşrin-i evvel 1295 (October 14, 1879).

The Celalis maintained their fragmented structure during the latter years of the Tanzimat not only in terms of their organization – having several factions under separate chiefs – but also in terms of being among the territories of the Russian, Ottoman and Persian Empires, especially Ottoman Bayezid, Persian Maku, and Russian Erevan. These factions were also in constant struggle among themselves over the pasturing grounds of the region. In 1863, William Spottiswoode described their fragmented structure as follows:

> Their kishlak, or winter quarters, are in villages about the little Ak Gol Lake, between the plain of Kara Aineh, Diadin, the Balyk Gol Lake, round Ararat to the Aras. Their yailak, or summer quarters, lie up the stream from Maku to the great Persian road, where they sometimes commit depredations on the caravans. The plundering season opens in May; in June it reaches its height; and it is brought to a close by interference on the part of the frontier authorities. The Jelalis are a wild set of fellows, and recognize neither sultan, nor tsar, nor shah.[735]

During the 1870s and 1880s, the Celalis engaged in a fierce struggle over pasturing grounds in the region which were spread among the territories of three empires, not only among but also with neighboring tribes. Those who wintered in Russian and Persian territory made annual migrations to Bayezid and Van on the Ottoman side of the border during the summers for grazing.[736] Such migrations were welcomed neither by Ottoman authorities nor by tribes who allied themselves with the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, it was during summer that the imperial capital was most often informed of inter-tribal conflicts and the atrocities of the tribes against villagers.[737]

Raiding across borders became an important aspect of inter-tribal conflict. In 1871, the Russian Celalis passed into Ottoman territory and attacked the Ottoman Celalis while they were grazing their animals on the pasturing grounds of Bayezid. It

[735] Spottiswoode, "Sketch of the Tribes of Northern Kurdistan," 244.
[736] BOA, HR.MKT 1231/86, 1297 (1882).
[737] BOA HR.MKT 683/126, 1289 (1871).

was reported that they killed three tribesmen and stole numerous animals.[738] In 1874, Persian Celalis crossed the border and pillaged more than 2000 sheep of the Keçelan tribe, which was a faction of the Celali allied with the Ottoman Empire.[739] The Ottoman Celalis also engaged in various pillage on the Persian and Russian sides of the border. In 1874, a certain butcher, Mehmedzâde Süleyman, from the Ottoman sanjak of Bayezid allied with Ottoman Celalis to plunder the livestock of the villages of the Persian town of Maku.[740] Such cross-border raids resulted in unending diplomatic contact among the three empires which generally bore no results.

6.2.1 The formation of the Hamidian Regiments

An important turning point in state-tribe relations in the late nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire was the formation of the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments in 1891.[741] Almost all the tribes of the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire, including Zilan, Celali and Haydaran became part of the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments. The process further contributed to the territorialization and stratification of the tribes, because of the imperial support and fiscal immunities provided by the institution. The idea of forming military regiments from the Kurdish tribes was not new. The notion of benefiting from the military capacity of the Kurdish tribes by organizing them under a military structure had already been put forward in various bureaucratic circles in the second half of the nineteenth century despite not being put into practice.[742] In 1888, the formation of a cavalry regiment of Kurdish tribesmen

[738] BOA, HR.MKT 715/27, 10 Temmuz 87 (July 22, 1871).
[739] BOA, HR.MKT 847/90, 27 Receb 91 (September 9, 1874).
[740] BOA, HR.MKT 833/68, 17 Nisan 90 (April 29, 1874).
[741] Duguid, "Centralization and Localism; Aspects of Ottoman Policy." Kodaman, "Hamidiye Hafif Süvari Alayları." Klein, *The Margins of Empire*.
[742] For instance, despite not lasting long, in 1863 zabtiye forces were formed from the Zilan tribe, see BOA, I.MVL 203/10366, 12 Recep 79 (January 3, 1863).

modeled on the Russian Cossack system began to be discussed among military officials of the Ottoman Empire.[743] In 1891, upon the initiative of Şakir Pasha, the Ottoman consul to the Russian Empire, and Zeki Pasha, the commander of the Fourth Anatolian Army, the first such regiments were formed following negotiations with several Kurdish chiefs. In 1892, Persian officials, who were closely observing the formation of the Hamidian regiments, expressed their intent to form similar regiments of Persian Kurds if the Ottoman ones were successful.[744]

Scholars generally contextualize the formation of the regiments in relation to the centralist, Islamist policies of Abdulhamid II (1876-1908) that were a countermeasure to growing Armenian nationalism as well as to a possible Russian incursion into Eastern Anatolia.[745] In ensuing years, Cavalry regiments also actively thwarted the activities of anti-Hamidian Kurdish intellectuals.[746] The aim of forming the regiments was to benefit from the Kurdish tribes militarily at the local level, since from the time of the early Tanzimat reforms it was evident that conscripting tribesmen into the regular army was difficult. Besides, the regiment was thought to be a civilizing institution that would bring "unruly" Kurdish tribes under state supervision and control.[747] They were also an attempt to increase the loyalty of the tribes to the Ottoman sultan. For the tribes, the official support of an imperial capital, the legal responsibility only to military law, and the exemptions from several taxes and services were great opportunities offered by the Hamidian regiments.

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[743] FO 195/1652, Consul Chermside to Sir W. White, December 22, 1888.
[744] FO 195/1766, Erzurum, June 10, 1892. 138.
[745] Duguid, "Centralization and Localism; Aspects of Ottoman Policy."; Kodaman, "Hamidiye Hafif Süvari Alayları."; Klein, *The Margins of Empire*.
[746] Koç, "Bedirxan Pashazades, Power Relations and Nationalism (1876-1914)," 74-75.
[747] Zeki Pasha, the commander of the Fourth Anatolian Army and Ismail Bey, a military officer in Ottoman Army during their conversation with British consul Maunsell, argued the necessity of subjecting Kurdish tribes to military law, since civil governors were not competent to train them and since tribes were ignorant. Even İsmail Bey argued that "England, he said, always dealt with savage, ignorant races first by military law and then introduced the civil control." See FO 424/192, Inclosure in No 236, Vice-Consul Maunsell to Sir P. Currie, Sivas, December 7,1897.

The Ottoman expectation was to form at least 20 thousand Kurdish cavalries answerable to Fourth Anatolian Army.[748] Each regiment was expected to consist of a minimum of 512 and maximum of 1152 men ruled by their own chief. Yet the scarcity of men revealed itself from the beginning, and the numbers remained lower than expected in the coming years. Consul Chermside argued that given the scarcity of men, tribal aghas pressured peasants to join their regiments.[749] While horses and ordinary clothing were to be provided by the tribes themselves, uniforms and military equipment were provided by the imperial state.[750]

The tribes who first joined the regiments were generally from the districts of Bayezid and Van, regions that bordered Russia, and those with large Armenian populations. Almost all the tribes in this region, including the Sepki, Zilan, Cemaldini, Haydaran, Celali, and Ademanlı became part of the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments (see table 1).[751] Many tribes joined voluntarily on account of the great fiscal and military immunities as well as protection provided. Indeed, tribes in this region, close to the Russian Empire, would have been aware of the opportunities and immunities that the Cossack regiments enjoyed in the Russian Empire. First, as part of the military structure, the tribes became legally subject only to military law, not the civil code. This strengthened the hand of tribal groups vis-à-vis provincial administration and other local power holders. Moreover, tribes who joined the regiments were exempt from certain taxes. They were obliged to pay only the tithe

[748] FO 424/172, Acting Vice-consul Fitzmaurice to Acting Consul Hampson, Van, June 11, 1892.
[749] FO 424/172, No. 26, Colonel Chermside to Sir Clare Ford, Constantinople, March 19, 1892.
[750] FO 424/172, No. 26, Colonel Chermside to Sir Clare Ford, Constantinople, March 19, 1892.
[751] FO 424/172, No. 26, Colonel Chermside to Sir Clare Ford, Constantinople, March 19, 1892. See also FO 424/203, Inclosure 2 in No. 11, Consul Lamb to Sir N. O'Conor, Erzurum, 31 December 1901. In southern lands, Ottoman authorities were more selective. Tribes who were mobile between Diyarbekir and Erzurum like Alikan, Reşkotan, Bekiran, or Alevi tribes inhabiting the mountainous zones like Dersim, Kurdish tribes of Mutki and Sason, Yezidis of Van despite their application, were not included into the regiments. See Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, 223-228.

(*aşar*) and sheep tax (*ağnam*),[752] which was an important motivation for tribes to participate. Finally, the arms given to the tribes provided them with a great military advantage over rivals.

Table 1. Hamidian Cavalry Regiments in Northeastern Ottoman Empire[753]

Tribe	Population in Households	Location	Pattern of Mobility	Number of Regiments
Sipkanlı	800	Antab	Sedentary or Semi-nomadic	1, 2
Zilanlı	1500	Eleşgird and Pasin	Semi-nomadic	3,[754] 4, 5
Karapapak	750	Antab	Semi-nomadic	6, 7
Cemaldini	300	Eleşgird	Nomadic	8
Ademanlı	500 + 300	Hamur and Aladağ	Nomadic	9, 10, 11[755]
Başmanlı	300	Hamur and Aladağ	Nomadic	12[756]
Zorava	800	Diadin and the Plain of Tuji	Nomadic	14[757]
Loli		Erciş		13, 14, 15, 16[758]
Haydaran		Erciş		21, 22, 23, 24, 25
Celali		Bayezid	Nomadic	37, 38
Kaskanlı[759]		Pasin	Semi-nomadic	61

[752] FO 424/172, No. 26, Colonel Chermside to Sir Clare Ford Constantinople, March 19, 1892. See also *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, 199.
[753] This table is based on two sources: FO 424/203, Inclosure 2 in No. 11, "List of Principal Kurdish Tribes in the Vilayet of Erzeroum" 1902. and BOA, Y.EE 81/42. For a recent translation and analysis of the Ottoman source, see Ekinci, "1897 Tarihli Hamidiye Haflf Süvari alayları Taksimatı." Neverthless, the number of regiments formed by the Ademanlı, Haydaran and Loli appears differently in other sources. See also Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, 368.
[754] 3rd regiment was recorded as Sipkanlı in FO 424/203, while it was recorded as Zilan in BOA, Y.EE 81/42 (in Ekinci). It is possible that the 3rd regiment was a combination of these two tribes.
[755] Appears as a regiment formed by Ademanlı in Foreign Office, 424/203, while it appears as Haydaran in BOA, Y.EE 81/42 (in Ekinci).
[756] Appears as a regiment of Haydaran in BOA, Y.EE 81/42 (in Ekinci).
[757] Appears as a regiment formed by Haydaran in BOA, Y.EE 81/42 (in Ekinci).
[758] 13rd and 14th regiments appear as the Haydaran tribe in other sources, see Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, 368.
[759] Kaskanlı despite being one of the earliest tribes in applying to be part of the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments, could not mobilize enough tribal men to form a regiment. Together with the Sevkari tribe it formed a regiment in 1898. See FO 424/196, Inclosure in No 28. From Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie, Erzeroum, April 8, 1898.

Even though the number of regiments indicated in various sources differ, the Haydaran and Zilan tribes and their former affiliates like the Ademanlı, Cemaldini, and Kaskanlı, as well as the tribe of Celali participated in the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments. And even though centrally-appointed military officials supervised the actions of each regiment, the tribes largely remained under the authority of their chiefs.

From the beginning, the formation of the Hamidian Cavalries intensified intra-tribal as well as inter-tribal disputes. In 1892, the segments of Celali tribe engaged in a fierce struggle among themselves about who would hold the leading rank in the new cavalry regiments. Seventeen men and a woman were killed, and twenty-eight men were wounded. A similar clash took place among the chiefs of the Haydaran, which resulted in the death of six people.[760] In the case of Haydaran, the struggle for the leadership of the tribe and for local resources continued during the entire 1890s among the chiefs of the tribe, which also affected local peasantry.[761] Even though their formation led to further fragmentation of large tribal confederations and intensified rivalries among ruling families, the tribes who joined the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments became more hierarchical and territorial in the long run. The discussion of how territoriality and hierarchy intensified on the ground in the 1890s must be prefaced by a look at the tax farming practices that constituted the fiscal dimension of this process.

[760] Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 32.
[761] Çiftçi, "Fragile Alliances in the Ottoman East," 270-282.

6.2.2 Agricultural production and tax farming

Like pastoral production, agricultural production and taxes collected from it became influential in shaping the internal organization of the tribes as well as their relations with other tribes and peasantry during the second half of the nineteenth century. In the provinces of Erzurum and Van, the main agricultural activity was largely dominated by grain (barley and wheat) production. Grain, was not only important for the winter requirements of the livestock, but also became an important source of revenue for the tribal chiefs towards the late nineteenth century. While nomadic tribes gradually began to have permanent winter settlements within definite territories, their relations with land tremendously changed during the second half of the nineteenth century. Fields, meadows were needed to supply the winter requirements of the animals.

Contrary to the pastoral production however, the development of agricultural production and its trade had a different trajectory during the nineteenth century. In 1841, Consul Brant argued that "this Pashalık is essentially a grain growing country, (…) yet the distance from the coast and the state of roads admitting the transport of goods only on the back of animals has hitherto prevented any exportation."[762] In the 1840s, especially in bountiful seasons, the cost of one imperial quarter wheat in the markets of Erzurum was equal to 13 s, 10 d (70 piasters), but the cost of transporting the same volume to the port of Trabzon was 9 s (45 piasters).[763] In 1874, Consul Taylor made a similar statement:

> With the growing demand for the limited number of mules or vehicles alone available, rates of hire upon grain to Trebizond amount to nearly double its cost price here (in Erzurum); and if to the latter are added contingent

[762] FO 78/443, James Brant, Erzeroom, September 30, 1841.
[763] FO 78/443, James Brant, Erzeroom, September 30, 1841. In 1847, in Erzurum 1 sterling pound was equal to 100 piasters. See FO 78/703, Henry H. Calvent, Notes on the Topography, Trade and Manufactures, Agriculture, Climate and Natural History of the Pashalık of Erzeroom, April 30, 1847.

> expenses, it will amount to more than double when laid down at the coast, scarcely 180 miles from Erzeroom.[764]

The situation had not changed by the late nineteenth century. In 1891, Consul Hampson argued that:

> One noticeable fact resulting from this difficulty of transport is that, from a grain-growing country as this, where almost any quantity of wheat might be produced, and where during the last two years, the harvests have been exceptionally favourable, the quantity of wheat quoted as exported is nil in 1889, and only to the value of 6,500 sterling pound in 1890.[765]

In the 1890s, the cost of transporting 230 kilos of grain by horseback from Erzurum to the port of Trabzon was 100 piasters, and the duration of the transport was nearly ten days.[766] Around the same time, the price of one *kile* (26 kilos) of wheat in Odessa was only ten piasters.[767]

In the second half of the nineteenth-century Erzurum and Van, the development of the trade of agricultural produce was slow, and its share of total exports was consistently low. Şevket Pamuk argues that in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia, agricultural production was mostly directed to local markets.[768] According to him, the region was "less affected by world-market-induced commercialization of agriculture than was any other region during the nineteenth century."[769] In 1885, the total value of wheat exported to foreign countries and other parts of the empire from the province of Erzurum was just 12 thousand pounds sterling.[770] In 1898, its value was only 7000 pounds sterling according to British consular reports.[771] Likewise, the

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[764] "Report by Consul Taylor on the Trade and Commerce of Koordistan for the Year 1873," 1603-1604.
[765] FO. Annual Series, "Report for the years 1889-90 on the Trade of the District of Erzeroum," 2.
[766] FO. Annual Series, "Report for the years 1889-90 on the Trade of the District of Erzeroum," 2.
[767] Güran, *19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Tarımı*, 72.
[768] Pamuk, *Türkiye'nin 200 Yıllık İktisadi Tarihi*, 134.
[769] Pamuk, "Commodity Production for World-Markets," 191.
[770] FO. Annual Series, "Report for the year 1885 on the Trade of the District of Erzeroum," 3.
[771] FO. Annual Series, "Report for the year 1898 on the Trade of Erzeroum," 10.

percentage of cultivated land in these provinces was low compared to others. In 1907, cultivated land in the province of Erzurum was equal to 4.4 percent of the area of the province, amounting to 3400 square kilometers. In Van it was equal to 1.6 percent (800 km^2), while in the province of Hüdavendigar it was 10.2 percent (7700 km^2).[772]

Despite the shortcomings in its internal and international trade, agricultural production was the most important aspect of the local economy and was the largest local generator of revenue for the state. The revenues from tithes from the province of Erzurum gradually increased throughout the nineteenth century. It was 156,391 pounds sterling in 1866 and 217,895 pounds sterling in 1876, just before the Ottoman-Russian war of 1877-78. After the reorganization of Van as an independent province and the annexation of Kars by the Russian Empire, tithe revenues continued to increase in Erzurum.[773] It was 90,378 pounds sterling and 172,356 pounds sterling in 1888 and 1894, respectively.[774] As discussed in the following sections, the tax farming of agricultural products were a source of great revenue for local notables as well as tribal chiefs.

Local agricultural production was mostly allocated for local consumption and for the requirements of the animals in winter since export tables indicate that little of the agricultural production was directed to other provinces of the empire. This was the dominant economic pattern in the region throughout the nineteenth century. Chapter 4 discusses how the absence of means of transport confined the region to its own productive capacity and that the region was visited by frequent famines in the 1840s. Moreover, the stocking of grain by monopolists, high prices, heavy taxation,

[772] Güran, *19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Tarımı*, 65.
[773] FO 881/4084, "Report by Mr. E. F. Harrison on the Finances of Turkey," 1880, 35.
[774] FO 881/6816, "Further Correspondence Respecting the Finances of Turkey," 1895, 15

emigration, and land left uncultivated were frequently mentioned in Ottoman as well as British sources in the mid-nineteenth century. Polatel points out that such conditions persisted even in the early twentieth century. In the districts of Bayezid and Van, tribal chiefs, who had established political dominance in the region, stocked large amounts of grain either through tax farming or through a pillage economy, increasing the price of grain and even causing local famines.[775]

Tax farming – despite being modified several times – prevailed as the most commonly applied method of extracting agricultural surplus along the northeastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire during the second half of the nineteenth century. Following the abolition of the yurtluk-ocaklık system in the 1840s, the rights to collect tithe and sheep taxes in the province of Erzurum were generally purchased by the city's Armenian and Muslim notables. But because of disputes between the Ottoman and Persian Empires over the subjecthood of the tribes and because of the difficulty of taxing such mobile groups, tribal chiefs were made responsible for the collection of taxes from tribal commoners.[776] However, the responsibility for the taxation of tribes was open to abuses. For instance, the chief of the Ademanlı faction of the Haydaran tribe, Ömer Ağa, was accused of overtaxing his tribesmen in 1865. It was reported that he collected an excess 53 thousand piasters from his tribe, but he avoided punishment by fleeing to the Persian side of the border.[777] Especially in the sanjaks of Bayezid and Muş and in the province of Van, where tribal groups constituted an important percentage of the local demographics, taxes were

[775] Polatel, "Armenians and the Land Question," 170-175.
[776] BOA, I.MVL 486/22043, 1280.M.8, (June 25, 1863). "*Sipki ve Celâli aşiretleriyle malumü'l esam tokuz adet karyede sakin olub memâlik-i İraniyeden Maku tarafına nakl-i hane iden Keçanlı taifesi ağnamı rüsumuna destres olamamasından naşi…"* See also BOA, A.MKT.UM 460/10, 19 Receb 77, (January 31, 1861). and BOA, I.MVL 538/24166, (August 17, 1865).
[777] BOA, MVL 712/97, 8 Temmuz 1281(July 20, 1865).

exclusively contracted to tribal chiefs in the 1880s and 1890s. In time, tribal chiefs also purchased the right to collect the taxes of villages in their tribal spaces.

Many non-local tax farmers were uninterested in revenues from the tribes or peasant villages near tribal spaces because the tribal chiefs created great difficulties for the tax collection process. However, the allocation of the collection of taxes to tribal chiefs resulted in misdeeds including the over-taxation and use of violence against the peasantry as well as lower echelons of the tribes. In the 1880s and 1890s, over-taxation by tribal chiefs became a major complaint of the Armenian peasantry in the Ottoman East, and in certain regions it even led to peasant uprisings as in the cases of Sasun and Talori in 1894.[778]

In 1895, because of the increasing number of complaints, social unrest among the Armenian peasantry of the Ottoman East, and increasing foreign pressure for the implementation of reform, a set of administrative and fiscal reforms were inaugurated in the provinces of Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, Mamüretü'laziz, Sivas, and Diyarbekir (which were collectively known as the *vilayat-ı sitte*, six provinces) under the supervision of Ahmed Şakir Pasha.[779] Fiscal aspects of the reforms aimed at regulating the tax farming practices as it was the main source of complaint of peasantry. In line with the reform program, the rights to collect tithes were to be sold at auction, not in bulk but village by village. Both tax farmers and villagers were given the right to participate in these auctions.[780] In the absence of a buyer, the tithe revenues would be collected by state agents. The aim of the reforms was to prevent the over-taxation of the peasantry.

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[778] Verheij, "Diyarbekir and Armenian Crises of 1895," 94.
[779] Karaca, *Anadolu Islahatı ve Ahmet Şakir Paşa (1838-1899)*. Özbek, "“Anadolu ıslahatı”, “Ermeni sorunu” ve vergi tahsildarlığı, 1895-1908.” See also Şaşmaz, *British Policy and the Application of Reforms for the Armenians in Eastern Anatolia*.
[780] Özbek, *İmparatorluğun Bedeli*, 75.

A major issue was the tax farming of Armenian villages by tribal chiefs, which the reforms aimed to prohibit because they were collecting excessive taxes and creating discontent among the peasantry. In 1895, several items of correspondence to the imperial capital drew attention to the misdeeds of tribal chiefs during the collection of taxes in Armenian villages. A report from Van indicated that tax revenues in the districts of Erciş, Adilcevaz, Bargiri, and Şitak were low, so there was no outside interest during the auctions. They had to be contracted to local tribal chiefs at low prices.[781] The same document proposed that the collection of the taxes be accomplished by state agents as the tribal chiefs were overtaxing and creating dissent among the peasantry. The same year, the governor of Van warned the imperial capital that in Adilcevaz, Christian villagers feared that the taxation of their villages would be farmed by tribal chiefs. The governor asserted that when taxes were purchased by tribal chiefs, they collected three times more than the usual amount. Moreover, it was argued that contracting tax farms to such tribal chiefs would result in the emigration of Christians from the region.[782]

In 1898, in tribal landscapes like Bayezid, Hınıs, and Malazgirt, the Hamidian chiefs were prohibited from purchasing the tax farms of Christian villages but not those of villages settled by Muslims.[783] However, the tax farming of Christian villages by tribal chiefs continued in several regions since similar orders from the imperial capital to prevent it were issued unevenly in ensuing years. British Consul Maunsell maintains that even in 1899, Armenian villages in the districts of Erciş and Adilcevaz were tax farmed by Hüseyin Pasha of the Haydaran who did not

[781] BOA, DH.MKT 390/75, 13 Haziran 1311, (June 25, 1895).
[782] BOA, BEO 650/48746, 10 Haziran 1311 (June 22, 1895), While the source define villagers as Christians, the majority of the Christian villagers were Armenians.
[783] BOA, DH.TMIK.S 21/76, 27 Cemaziye'l-evvel 1316 (October 13, 1898), See also Özbek, "'Anadolu ıslahatı", "Ermeni sorunu" ve vergi tahsildarlığı, 1895-1908," 79.

allow anyone else to buy the tax farms. Starting in 1899, however, state officials attempted to collect the taxes of these two districts.[784] Klein states that despite the prohibition of the central state regarding the tax farming of the tithes of Armenian villages by the Kurdish chiefs of the Hamidian Regiments, they would purchase the tithes in the names of others.[785] Over-taxation by the chiefs did not only apply to Armenian villagers. In 1901, migrants from Russia settled in the villages of Karakilise demanded that they be granted the tax farming of their villages since local Kurdish chiefs were overtaxing them. The Ministry of Finance agreed to farm the taxes to the villagers provided that the revenues would not be less than the previous year.[786]

Importantly, in many instances, the provincial treasury benefited little from the revenues tax farmed by tribal chiefs. One report indicates that the taxes of the sanjak of Bayezid, which were farmed out to tribal chiefs, was only enough to offset the salaries of the Hamidian tribal officers.[787] In 1894, a correspondence from imperial capital stated that the tribal chiefs of the sanjak of Bayezid who participated in the Hamidian cavalries owed 2 million piasters of unpaid tithe and sheep taxes to the provincial treasury.[788] In 1895, Şakir Pasha noted that the villages of Bayezid had to be farmed out to tribal chiefs since outside tax farmers feared their retribution. As in the cases of aforementioned districts, the villages of Bayezid were farmed out to tribal chiefs at low prices.[789] An Ottoman official correspondence indicates that Hüseyin Pasha, the chief of the Haydaran tribe and director of Patnos, did not

[784] FO 195/2063, From Maunsell to Sir Nicholas O'Conor, Van, September 10, 1899.
[785] Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, 145.
[786] BOA, A.MKT.MHM 685/5, 16 Temmuz 1317 (July 29, 1901).
[787] BOA, BEO 664/49773, 23 Temmuz 311 (August 4, 1895).
[788] BOA, Y.A.HUS 303/53, 7 Temmuz 310 (July 19, 1894).
[789] BOA, Y.EE 133/14, 22 Eylül 1311 (October 4, 1895). See also BOA, MV 71/64, 11 Ramazan 310 (March 29, 1893).

forward the sheep taxes from the region of Patnos to the treasury and even intended to collect sheep taxes in the districts of Tutak and Karakilise.[790] That same year, the governor of Erzurum noted that in the sanjak of Bayezid every village was tax farmed by its own notables and no one participated in the auctions of other villages, which decreased the amount of taxes collected.[791] Averyanov makes similar statements about the province of Van, the revenues of which were lowered to a great extent by the fact that since the formation of the Hamidian regiments from 1891 to 1898, not a single piaster had been paid by the Kurdish tribes. Because the collection of tithes was contracted to tribal chiefs, the peasantry and tribal commoners were open to exploitation by them.[792]

Under such conditions, tax farming increased the wealth of tribal chiefs and their political authority over tribal commoners and villagers. As tax farming was a great stream of revenue for tribal chiefs, they sought to expand the range of their influence to villages in their vicinity.

6.3 Conflicts over the pastures, agricultural lands and villages

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the increasing commercialization of pastoral production and the delegation of authority to tribal chiefs made pastoral nomadic tribes more stratified and territorial. The immediate result was an increase in inter-tribal as well as tribe-peasant conflicts. These conflicts manifest themselves as the occupation of villages, agricultural land, and pasturing grounds. Livestock and grain seizures were also an important aspect of such conflicts. In the following lines,

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[790] BOA, BEO, 1870/140212, 5 Haziran 318 (June 16, 1902).
[791] BOA, 1897/142216, 16 Temmuz 318 (June 29, 1902) *"Bir takım ümera ve zi-nüfuz zevat kendi karyesini iltizam etmek usulü cari bulunduğundan bunlardan birinin diğeri köyüne pe sürmesi kabil olmadığı gibi depozito ve teminat almak dahi mümkün olmadığından sinin sabıkadan külliyetli bakaya bulunduğu."*
[792] Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, 221.

I focus on first the conflicts among the tribes on pastures as well as villages. In the second part I concentrate on the conflicts between tribes and Armenian and Kurdish peasantry on villages, fields and meadows.

6.3.1 Inter-tribal conflicts over pasturelands and villages

Both pasturelands and villages were vitally important for the pastoral economy. Conflicts over them enhanced solidarity within tribal groups and contributed to the formation of tribal identities and tribal spaces (See Figure 10 for the map of tribal spaces). Tribal chiefs effectively turned their lands into enclaves protected by tribal militias that were used mostly for pastoral production. Lynch, during his travels from Tutak to Patnos, noted that "in crossing from the territory of Sipkanlı tribe to that of the Haideranli, we should be obliged to run the gauntlet of the armed parties which scoured the frontier between these two hostile parties."[793] During the late nineteenth century, the Haydaran tribe was ruled by four different chiefs and was spread from Persian Khoy in the east to Ottoman Abagay, Erciş, Adilcevaz, and Patnos in the west. In the 1890s, about 500 tents of the Haydaran wintered in Karain (Qeleni) under the chief Tahir Khan. Their pasturing grounds were in the mountains bordering the Ottoman Empire ten miles from their winter settlement. Another section consisting of 2 thousand families was located in the Abagay pastures and had begun to establish villages for winter settlement in the same region.[794] They were under the authority of Mehmed Sıddık Agha. The third section wintered in Erciş and Adilcevaz, was under the authority of Emin and Timur Pashas, and roamed Aladağ during the summers. The fourth section, under the authority of Hüseyin Agha, mostly

[793] Lynch, *Armenia Travels and Studies*, 2, 16.
[794] Bayraktar, *20. Yüzyıl Dönemecinde Rus General Mayevsky'nin Türkiye Gözlemleri Van-Bitlis Vilâyetleri Askeri İstatistiği*, 324-328.

wintered in the villages of Patnos but driving their animals in the Aladağ Mountains. The Haydaran that settled in the most populated districts of the region, which were close to favorable pasturing grounds, emerged as one of the largest, most powerful tribes to the north of Lake Van.

Further to the north, the nahiyes (administrative sub-district) of Tutak and Aintab were the tribal spaces of the Sepki who were under chief Yusuf Agha. They mostly used the northern slopes of the Aladağ as their main pasturing grounds. The Ademanlı tribe was spread among the villages of Erciş (Zilan Deresi) and Bayezid and used the pasturing grounds of Tuji and Aladağ during the summers. Segments of the Celali were spread across a vast geography including Persian Maku, Russian Erevan, and Ottoman Bayezid. These tribes engaged in unending competition and conflict among themselves over the main pasturing grounds of the region. The pasturing grounds of tribal groups were also recognized by the imperial capital. In 1889, when a group from the Haydaran tribe attempted to graze their animals in the pasturing grounds of Bitlis, the imperial capital warned local authorities that the pasturing grounds allocated to the Haydaran tribe were those of Aladağ.[795] The territorial boundedness of tribal groups also shaped the administrative structure of the region in time. For instance, nahiye were named for tribes in the sanjak of Bayezid, like the nahiyes of Haydaran and Sipkanlı.[796]

As discussed, the commercialization of pastoral production led tribes to engage in unending rivalry over grazing grounds as well as settlements in the region. Inter-tribal conflicts manifest themselves as occupation of pasturing grounds, agricultural land, and settlements as well as mass raids of livestock and seizures of

[795] BOA, DH.MKT 1647/80, 25 Temmuz 305 (August 6, 1889).
[796] Karataş, "XIX. Yüzyılın Sonlarında Bayezid Sancağı'nın Demografik Yapsına Dair Tespitler," 117-120.

grain. Tribal groups raided mainly sheep, cattle, horses, and grain, the most valuable products of the geography. In the following lines, I first discuss the conflicts over the main pasturing grounds of Van and Bayezid and then the conflicts over agricultural land, villages, and houses.

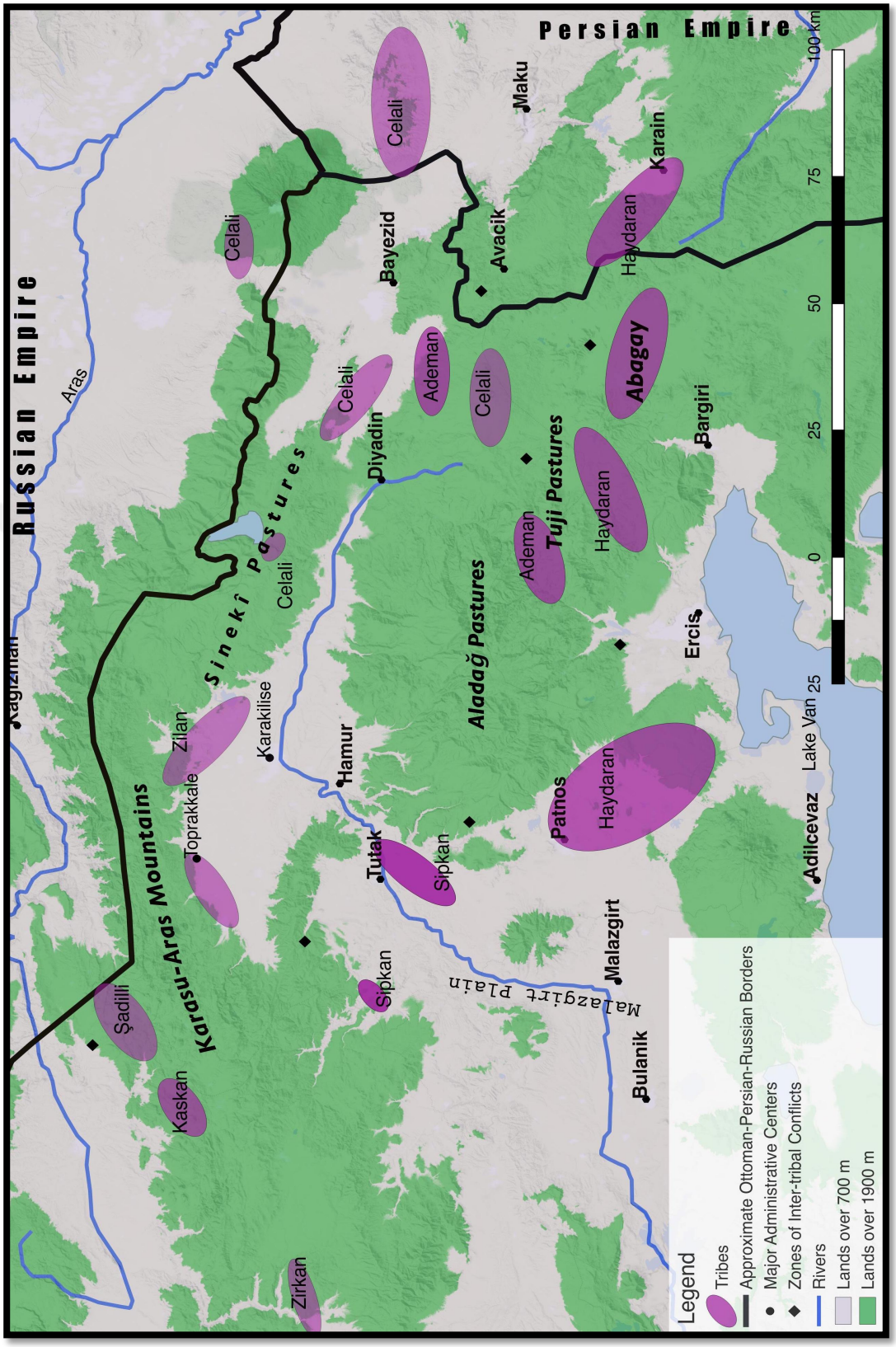

Figure 10. Tribal spaces during the late 19th and early 20th centuries
Source: [Reproduced with QGIS. Based on BOA, HRT.h 445; IBB, Atatürk Kitaplığı, HRT 00003, 355.566.2 OSM [t.y.] k.1/1.]

In late 1889, a group of the Celali tribe from the Maku district of the Persian Empire passed into the Ottoman territory of Abagay, attacked the Haydaran tribe, and killed some of its members.[797] This event triggered reciprocal attacks and pillaging between the Haydaran and Celali tribes in the 1890s, which resulted in deaths as well as repeated livestock raids in the region. Despite being defined as a feud by Ottoman authorities, the enmity between the two tribes clearly stemmed from desire to control the rich Abagay pastures. In the previous part, it has been discussed how the region was a favorable landscape for animal husbandry and that the Haydaran tribe, under the leadership of Ali Agha, had established authority in the region. When the Celali tribe once again attacked the Haydaran in 1890 and killed ten tribesmen and an Ottoman gendarme, Ottoman and Persian authorities resolved to form a commission to settle the conflict between the tribes.[798]

The main reason for the Celali attacks on the Abagay pastures was a shortage of pasturing grounds on the Persian side of the border.[799] Ottoman officials further claimed that Timur Pasha Khan, the governor of Persian Maku who himself owned 30 to 40 thousand sheep, also needed this pastureland for his large flocks. He had armed the Celalis and provoked them to attack the Haydaran tribe to increase his influence in the region.[800] The claims of the Haydaran tribe to Abagay was supported by Ottoman officials, as the region had long been contested between the Ottoman and the Persian Empires. The Ottomans, as in the previous decades, were concerned about losing this land to the Persians and actively supported the claims of the

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[797] Foreign Office 424/162, Inclosure 1 in no 87. Vice Consul Devy to Consul Chermiside, Van, 4 September 1889. For the conflict between Celali and Haydaran tribes see also Çiftçi, "Ottoman Policy in the Ottoman-Iranian Borderland during the late 19th Century."; Bingül, "XIX. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Van," 420-423.
[798] Süphandağ, *Büyük Osmanlı Entrikası Hamidiye Alayları*, 319.
[799] In 1890s 930 tents of Celali tribe were residing in Persia including Khana Kanlu (300), Birka Kanlu (150), Misri Kanlu (100), Khundi Kanlu (20), Gini Kanlu (20), Kizil Bash Ougli (250), Sakanlu, (80). Retrieved from https://www.qdl.qa/archive/81055/vdc_100087690975.0x00008
[800] BOA, Y.PRK.BŞK 18/8, 27 Haziran 306, (July 9, 1890).

Haydaran and their struggle against the Persian Celali tribe. The tension between these tribes was also evident on the Persian side of the border. With respect to the Çaldıran valley, Picot argues that "the difference between these two tribes [kept] the valley in a constant ferment, and prevent[ed] the development of its fine lands by the Turk peasant."[801]

In the early 1890s, Ottoman and Persian authorities formed a joint commission to resolve disputes between these tribes since their attacks violated the security of the region. The commission was ineffective in its early years but eventually convinced both parties to end the enmity. The tension between the Haydaran and Celali tribes was to be resolved according to tribal customs (*usul-i aşâir*). Since the number of Haydaran deaths during the conflicts was greater, the Celalis were persuaded to pay them 1050 sheep as blood money (*diyet*).[802] Despite episodic attacks of the Celalis on the Ottoman Haydaran, Abagay mostly remained a pasturing and wintering space of the Haydaran tribe until the demise of the empire. This region, which was all but uninhabited in the mid-nineteenth century, became populated by villages established by the Haydaran in the last quarter of the century.[803]

To the north, Tuji, another pasturing ground between the sanjak of Bayezid and Van that was administratively part of the latter, was also contested. This pastureland was traditionally used by the Ademan tribe; however, in the 1880s, Tuji was under constant threat of the Celali and Haydaran. In 1887, given the threats neighboring tribes, especially of the Haydaran, the chief of the Ademan tribe

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[801] Retrieved from https://www.qdl.qa/archive/81055/vdc_100087690975.0x000084
[802] BOA, BEO 568/42543, 26 Kanun-i sani 310, (February 7, 1895).
[803] Bayraktar, *20. Yüzyıl Dönemecinde Rus General Mayevsky'nin Türkiye Gözlemleri Van-Bitlis Vilâyetleri Askeri İstatistiği*, 324-327.

mobilized 800 tribesmen and spent the summer that year in the Tuji pasturelands.[804] One year later, the governor of Van attempted to cut the access of the Ademanlı tribe to these pasturing grounds claiming that the region was administratively attached to the province of Van and thus should be used by the tribes of Van.[805] Local informants emphasized that cutting the Ademanlı tribe's access to the pasturing grounds of Tuji would result in the loss of their animals, and that same year, the imperial capital ordered that they should not be prevented from grazing their animals in Tuji.[806] The right to use Tuji pastures remained one reason behind the contention between the Ademanlı and the Haydaran tribes in the second half of the nineteenth and in the early twentieth century. Reciprocal raids continued to be an aspect of the local politics and power balance between these tribes.[807]

Further to the north, former clans of the Zilan Confederation, including the Kaskanlı, Cemaldinî, and Şadili tribes, also engaged in fierce competition to protect their new tribal spaces. The annexation of Kars by the Russian Empire during the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-78 led many former sections of the Zilan under the authority of Eyüp Pasha and the Cemaldinî under the authority of Hüseyin Agha to migrate to Ottoman territory from Kars and Revan.[808] A second wave of migration from Russia coincided with the formation of the Hamidian Regiments in 1891. In the hope of increasing numbers in their regiments and benefiting from the opportunities that joining the Hamidian Cavalries offered, several families of the Zilan, Cemaldini,

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[804] BOA, I.DH 1038/81645, 2 Temmuz 303 (July 14, 1887) and BOA, DH.MKT 1431/112, 30 Haziran 303 (July 12, 1887).
[805] BOA, DH.MKT 1523/64, 7 Temmuz 1304 (July 19, 1888).
[806] BOA, DH.MKT 1536/60, 26 Temmuz 1304 (August 7, 1888).
[807] BOA, İ.HUS 25/32, and BOA, DH.H 5/107.
[808] BOA, I.DH 840/67536, 7 Teşrin-i sani 97 (November 19, 1881) "*An asıl Rusya devletinin Revan vilayeti dahilinde kain Zilan aşireti rüesasından olub yedi yüz hane mütecaviz aşireti halkıyla ve emlak ve akarını terk edüb yalnız evlad ve ayaliyle memalik-i osmaniyeye hicretle"* For the Cemaldini Tribe, see BOA, ŞD 1505/48, 25 Muharrem 97 (January 8, 1880). The same source also indicates that Hüseyin Agha was appointed as the chief of the Cemaldini Tribe with 400 piasters monthly salary after his father's death.

Kaskanlı, and Şadili migrated into Ottoman territory. Such a migration contributed to disputes over the pastures and villages of Karakilise, Eleşgirt, Toprakkale, and Pasinler, districts that were adjacent to the Russian Empire.

In 1891, Eyüp Pasha, the chief of the Zilan, requested land in fifteen Armenian villages for the families of Zilan, Sepki, and Cemaldini who had migrated from Russia and various regions of the empire to become part of Hamidian Cavalry Regiments.[809] And many were indeed settled in Armenian villages since the governor of Erzurum argued that there would be no problem settling them in the Armenian villages of Karakilise.[810] In 1894, the local council of Eleşgird informed that 189 households of the Zilan and Celali tribes were settled on vacant land (*arazi-i haliye*) in fourteen villages of the district of Eleşgirt, while 79 were settled in five newly-built villages.[811] Thus, the Zilan were mostly spread between the districts of Eleşgirt and Karakilise. The Cemaldini families were mostly distributed among the villages of Toprakkale. To the west, the Cemaldini were neighbors of the Kaskanlı and Zirkanlı tribes, and to the east, they shared a border with the Zilan who occupied the villages north of Karakilise.[812] There were also several families of the Zilan, Kaskanlı, and Cemaldini tribes remained in Russian Kars.[813]

Like the Haydaran, Celali, and Ademanlı, the northern tribes on the border with the Russian Empire were also in constant conflict with one another. Countering village raids became an important aspect of these inter-tribal conflicts. Şakir Pasha,

[809] BOA, I.MMS 123/5292, 18 Muharrem 1309 (August 24, 1891) and BOA, MV 66/84 7 Muharrem 1309 (August 13, 1891).
[810] BOA, MV 66/84 7 Muharrem 1309 (August 13, 1891).
[811] BOA, Y.A HUS 314/85, 30 Temmuz 310 (August 11, 1894).
[812] BOA, I.MMS 123/5292, 11 Ağustos 308 (August 23, 1892).
[813] Badem, *Çarlık Rusyası Yönetiminde Kars Vilayeti*, 162-165.

in a report, explained inter-tribal conflicts through "tribal solidarity" and a "struggle for tribal leadership"."[814]

In 1895, it was reported that the Cemaldini and Sepki – both of whom were part of Hamidian Cavalry Regiments – were attacking each other. The Cemaldini attacked the village of Mezrek in the district of Tutak, which was located within the tribal space of the Sepki. In response, the Sepki attacked the village of Abbas in the tribal domain of the Cemaldini. Reciprocal attacks resulted in several deaths.[815] It was even reported that the Haydaran tribe also joined the attacks, though it was uncertain which side they supported.[816] Since all the participants in the conflict were in the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments, that is to say a part of army, the conflicts were to be resolved by the Fourth Ottoman Army.

In summer 1899, similar conflicts occurred between the Cemaldini and Zirkanlı tribes resulting in the death of one of the Zirkanlı. While both sides mobilized their cavalries, tensions were eased again with the intervention of the Fourth Ottoman Army. The commander of Ottoman armies, Riza Pasha, argued that such inter-tribal conflicts stemmed from unresolved land disputes among the tribes of the region.[817] In 1901, the chief of the Cemaldini tribe, Hüseyin Ağa, who was a member of the 8th Regiment of the Hamidian Cavalries, occupied the village of Hüsrevan in Pasinler along with forty armed tribal militiamen. It was reported that he evicted Zilan families from the village, occupied the land and houses of the villagers, and settled his tribesmen there. The same year, Nebi and Hüseyin, two chiefs of Zilan who were commanders of the 4th Regiment of the Hamidian Cavalries,

[814] Karaca, *Anadolu Islahatı ve Ahmet Şakir Paşa (1838-1899)*, 93.
[815] BOA, BEO 453/33904, 30 Agustos 310 (September 11, 1894).
[816] BOA, BEO 453/33967, 21 Temmuz 310 (August 2, 1894).
[817] BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 153/74, 19 Temmuz 1310 (July 31, 1894).

occupied the villages of Çirason and Tuti in Pasinler and settled their own tribal members in them.[818]

6.3.2 Conflicts between tribes and peasantry over villages, fields and houses

Conflicts were not simply inter-tribal but were also manifest itself between the tribes and the local peasantry. While inter-tribal conflicts increased their solidarity and territoriality, relations and conflicts with the local peasantry enhanced "feudal bonds" at the local level. The political dominance of the tribes effectively reduced peasants to "serfs" and caused their impoverishment, prompting their emigration from the region. Even though sources tend to address the oppression of the Armenian peasantry of Patnos, Erciş, and Adilcevaz, Karakilise and Eleşgird more elaborately, the Kurdish and Turkish peasantry in the same geography also lived under the constant threat of tribal groups.

Among all the tribes of the northeastern frontiers of the empire, sources tend to highlight the oppression of the Haydaran tribe and its chiefs. Hüseyin Agha, chief of the Haydaran of Patnos, was promoted within the administrative hierarchy, and his authority was backed by Zeki Pasha, the commander of the Fourth Anatolian Army, following his participation in the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments in 1891.[819] Before the formation of the regiments he was the first headmen and then director of the sub-district of Patnos. After joining the Hamidian Cavalries, he rose to the rank of pasha forming several regiments from among his tribal members. He also purchased the

[818] BOA, DH.TMIK.M 111/50, 13 Eylul 1317 (September 26, 1901).
[819] For studies on Hussein Pasha of the Haydaran, see Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, 128-169. Abak, "Kürt Politikasında Hamidiye Siyasetine Dönüş ve Kör Hüseyin Paşa Olayı, 1910-1911." Çiftçi, "Fragile Alliances in the Ottoman East." For the collection of several Ottoman sources on the Haydaran, particularly on Hüseyin Pasha see Süphandağ, *Büyük Osmanlı Entrikası Hamidiye Alayları*.

right to tax farm several villages in the vicinity of Patnos, Erciş, and Adilcevaz on an annual basis.

The oppression by Hüseyin Agha along with that of other chiefs of the Haydaran like Emir and Timur Pashas against local Armenian and Kurdish peasants during the 1890s occupied an important place in British and Ottoman sources. They were accused of crimes against the peasantry ranging from day-to-day oppression, seizure of moveable and immoveable property, over-taxation through tax farming, forced labor, and the destruction of churches and houses. Despite being brought before the court and imprisoned in several instances, they managed to free themselves by bribing local officials.

In 1890, Hüseyin Agha was put in prison after being convicted of burning villages and killing several persons. During his attacks on neighboring villages, he poached 2600 sheep, nine horses, many cattle, and property of all sorts.[820] However, because of his local relations, he was released in August 1890, after which he forcibly collected 300 lire in the district of Patnos. In November 1890, he was again taken into custody, but his relatives persisted with similar misdeeds in the region. With 100 horsemen, his brother and son raided three villages in the sub-district of Aintab and carried off 300 sheep, 150 cattle, five horses, and numerous carpets. A week later, a similar raid was carried out in twenty-one Armenian villages of the district of Aintab by other relatives of his. Nearly 350 lire and 200 *batmans* of butter were collected.[821] After his return to Patnos in 1891, he imprisoned twenty Armenians having accused them of collaborating with Russian Armenians. He also forcibly collected 1000 sheep and seven pairs of buffalo from the Christians and

[820] FO 424/169, Inclosure 3 in No 8, Acting Consul Hampson to Sir W. White, Erzeroum, January 16, 1891.
[821] FO 424/169, Inclosure 3 in No 8, Acting Consul Hampson to Sir W. White, Erzeroum, January 16, 1891.

Muslims of Patnos having already made an agreement to sell them to a merchant in Patnos. Such crimes remained largely unpunished.[822] That same year, Hüseyin Pasha engaged in a tour of Eleşgirt to collect horses and men to join the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments.[823]

His oppression was not simply the plunder of the moveable property of the peasantry. He also seized immoveables including agricultural land, pastures, houses, and churches of the Armenian peasantry, especially after his participation in the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments. Polatel illustrates how Hüseyin and Emin Pashas of the Haydaran tribe also seized the immoveable properties of the Armenian peasantry north of Lake Van.[824] Hüseyin Pasha usurped the mills, pastures, houses, agricultural fields, and hayfields of Armenians in the districts of Adilcevaz, Malazgirt and Patnos.[825] Emin Pasha and his family seized numbers of fields, pastures, watermills, gardens, vineyards, hayfields, and orchards from the Christian population of the villages of Erciş, Van, and Bayezid.[826] In several instances, Emin and Hüseyin Pashas drove the peasantry out of villages and settled tribesmen who were close to them in their place. In 1896, it was reported that Hüseyin Pasha forcibly expelled the inhabitants of five or six villages in Erciş and transferred their lands to those in his entourage.[827] The geographical location of these villages demonstrates the territoriality of the pillage and land transfer. Hüseyin Pasha

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[822] FO 424/169, Inclosure in No. 31 Acting Consul Hampson to Sir W. White, Erzeroum, March 7, 1891.
[823] FO 424/169, Inclosure 1 in No. 19, Acting Consol Hamspon to Sir W. White, Erzeroum, January 27, 1891.
[824] Polatel, "Armenians and the Land Question in the Ottoman Empire, 1870-1914," 124-128.
[825] The land usurpation took place in Kırakom, (Erciş), Güzelköy (Adilcevaz), Çırakköy (Adilcevaz), Koçirin (Erikbağı, Adilcevaz), Keyacukh (Adilcevaz), Narmus (Malazgirt), Poti (Tutak), Patnos. For more information, see Polatel, "Armenians and the Land Question," 127.
[826] Paniköy (Erciş), Kineper (Van), Tilan (Erciş), Murzavank (Erciş), Azoraf (Erciş), Cüdgear (Erciş Karatavuk), Küpgıran (Bayezit), Dzadgag (Akçayuva Erciş). See Polatel, "Armenians and the Land Question," 125.
[827] Süphandağ, *Büyük Osmanlı Entrikası Hamidiye Alayları*, 363-364.

engaged in usurped land and property in the villages of the districts of Patnos and Adilcevaz while he was a resident of Patnos. Emin Pasha engaged in similar transgressions in villages around Erciş.

The peasantry that remained in tribal districts were essentially reduced to serfdom. Forced labor, over-taxation, and corvée in tribal districts were mentioned in Ottoman as well as British sources. Without a doubt, purchasing the right to tax farm increased the hands of tribal chiefs with respect to their exploitation and oppression of the peasantry. As Özbek argues, the pillage economy perpetuated by tribal groups overlapped in some instances with tax farming practices carried by the same tribal groups in the 1890s.[828] Similarly, in 1903, the Armenian *murahhas* of Adilcevaz states in a petition that

> In this Caza, Hussein pasha, Chief of the Haideranlı Ashiret and a Mir alai of Hamidieh, who, ever since the year of famous massacres, has seized, and taken possession of, the goods and revenues, the property and fields of the Armenians, was last year appointed to the post of acting Kaimakam of the Caza of Adeljivass. […] The Above Hussein pasha, while he was Kaimakam vekile, farmed the entire taxes of the Caza of Adeljivass, and having appointed four or five Kurds, from his servants, as officials and guardians over the threshing floors in every village, gave orders to his servants for the taking of one fourth of tithe in a manner contrary to the law, and as if he had firmly resolved on killing all those who objected to this order.[829]

Territorial expansion by the tribes was also achieved through promises of protection (*himaye*). Both Armenian and Kurdish peasantry, under the threat of tribal groups, sought the protection of powerful tribal chiefs. On 29 March 1896, the governor of Erzurum, Rauf Pasha, conveyed reports that in certain districts of the province Kurdish chiefs, by promising their protection, had registered the land of Armenians

[828] Özbek, "“Anadolu ıslahatı”, “Ermeni sorunu” ve vergi tahsildarlığı, 1895-1908," 78.
[829] FO 424/206, Inclosure 1 in No. 226, vice-Consul Tyrell to Sir N. O’Conor, Van, October 11, 1904 and Inclosure 2 in No 216, “Letter from the Armenians Murakhas of Adeljivass, respecting the state of suffering of Armenians in the Caza of Adeljivass”

in their own names. The governor indicated that certain chiefs including Hüseyin, Emin, and Timur Pashas of the Haydaran had been warned about the issue.[830]

The oppression and exploitation of Haydaran chiefs was not peculiar to Armenian peasants. Kurdish peasants were also under their constant threat. In 1901, British Vice Consul Satow related that;

> At Kojeri, two hours from Adeljivas, I heard great complaints about the latter, I saw some granaries which he had forced the villagers to build, pulling down their houses, and cutting down their trees to provide the materials. He has seized a large proportion of their pastures, and his last move has been to demand 300 liras in ready money from this and seven neighboring villages. The government seem unable to prevent such outrages by so powerful a man as Hussein Pasha, especially as he is supported from Erzingian.… At Gugus, a village of Raya Kurds, four hours from Arjish, the people seem little better off than their Armenian neighbors. There, too, Hussein Pasha had seized pastures. The people complained that it was difficult to obtain necessities like rice and tobacco, as travelers were afraid to move about the country.[831]

Peasants who had no bonds with powerful tribes were more than ever open to the atrocities of tribal groups. They were forced to take part in or become the clients of large tribal confederations. In the mid-1880s, the villagers of Zomik, who were members of the Haydaran tribe, were vulnerable to the attacks of neighboring tribes, especially the Sepki and Etmaniki. Since they were unable to resist the increasing pressure of these tribes, they appealed to the chief of the Haydaran tribe, Hüseyin Agha, to request protection from these attacks. In return, they even invited Huseyin Agha to their village and gave him parcels of land.[832] After his appointment as the müdir of Patnos and his later participation in the Hamidian Cavalry regiments, Huseyin Pasha ousted the villagers from Zomik, settled his own devoted tribesmen, and turned the village into his private estate.

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[830] BOA, Y.PRK.BŞK 45/75, 17 Mart 312 (March 29, 1896) *"Vilâyat-ı mütecavirece bazı rüesa-yı ekradın güya Ermenileri muhfaza vesilesiyle arazileri kendü namlarına teferrüğ etmekde oldukları"*
[831] FO 424/202, Inclosure 2 in No. 41, Vice-Consul Satow to Sir N. O'Conor, Van, June 10, 1901
[832] BOA, DH.H 74/3, 4 Haziran 1327 (June 17, 1911).

In the relatively optimistic atmosphere of the Second Constitutional Period, the villagers of Zomik settlement found the courage to file petitions. After an investigation, it was revealed that Hüseyin Agha had usurped the land and houses of the villagers.[833] While Hüseyin Agha claimed to have bought the land from the villagers, they asserted that he had forcibly seized their land. An investigation in 1911 revealed that Hüseyin Agha possessed the title deeds for four fields, fifteen meadows, and a winter quarter, which amounted to 340 *dönüm* in size. Yet the land of the village that Hüseyin Agha claimed in its entirety was 25-30 thousand *dönüm*.[834] Local officials also stated that forgeries and the destruction of local records hid the real quantity of land transfers.[835] The investigation determined that taxes on the houses and land of Zomik claimed by Hüseyin Pasha had been regularly paid by the villagers of Zomik.[836] The commission opined that Hüseyin Pasha treated tribal members like slaves, changing their locations and settling them in villages at will.[837]

The case of Zomik exemplifies the stratification of tribal structure. Almost all the villagers of Zomik, who were themselves from the Haydaran, became landless due to the oppression of their chief. They had to migrate to surrounding villages, towns, and cities, and become part of the labor force in urban centers. Those who remained in the village were forced to pay the taxes on the land.

To the north, in the districts of Eleşgirt, Karakilise, and Toprakkale, there was also tension between tribal groups and the local peasantry, though not as intense as in

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[833] BOA, DH.H 15/9, 6 Şubat 1326 (February 19, 1911).
[834] BOA, DH.H 74/3, 4 Haziran 1327 (June 17, 1911) *"Zomik karyesinde ihtiva eylediği arazi Hüseyin paşanın elinde tapulara göre dört tarla on beş çayır ve bir kışlaktan ibaret olmayub bine karib tarla ve otuz çayır ve kaç ittihaz edilecek mera yani tahminen 25 -30 bin araziyi havidir."*
[835] BOA, DH.H 74/7, 27 Temmuz 1327 (August 9, 1911).
[836] BOA, DH.H 74/7, 27 Temmuz 1327 (August 9, 1911).
[837] BOA, DH.H 74/3, 4 Haziran 1327 (June 17, 1911).

Patnos, Adilcevaz, and Erciş. These districts, which were close to the Russian border, were closely monitored by Ottoman authorities. In 1891, the kaimakam of Eleşgirt, Ahmed Bey, was dismissed from his position after being accused of overtaxing the Armenian peasantry.[838]

The chief of the Zilan, Eyüp Pasha, and members of his tribe were also accused of various crimes including the murder and seizure of the moveable and immoveable property of Armenians in the districts of Karakilise and Eleşgirt. The complaints of Armenians started in 1891 at the time Eyüp Pasha was promising to form regiments for the Hamidian Cavalries and demanding proper settlements for his tribesmen in the districts of Eleşgirt and Karakilise. When tribal members of the Zilan who had recently migrated from Russian territories were settled in Armenians villages in these districts, the villagers began to complain about the atrocities of tribal chiefs, and many decided to migrate to Russian territory.

In 1891, the *murahhas* of Bayezid stated that Eyüp Pasha, whom he defined as a chief of bandits (*reis-i eşkiya)*, had committed numerous crimes in the district of Karakilise. His men had forcibly collected money and cattle from villages, and as a consequence, many Armenians intended to migrate to Russian territory.[839] The local administrative council of Karakilise also prepared a report about the atrocities of Eyüp Pasha in which they argued there was no way that Armenians and Eyüp Pasha could live together so long as the latter carried out various crimes against the former. Similarly, they reported that many Armenian households had migrated to Russia and many others were preparing to leave the district.[840] Local authorities and telegrams

[838] FO 424/169, No. 15, Sir W. White to the Marquis Salisbury, Constantinoople, 19 February 1891
[839] BOA, DH.MKT 2065/107. "Bayezid Ermeni Murahassalığı Vekaletinin 2 Haziran 309 (June 14, 1893) tarihli tezkiresi suretidir." "*Beher karyeden otuz kırk (...) mecidiye cebren tahsil ve Çelkan karyesinden beş lira alenen ve Hıdır Karyesi muhtarından dört öküz sırkaten ahz ve gasb"*
[840] BOA, DH.MKT 2065/107, 27 Mayıs 309 (June 8, 1893).

received by the Patriarchate proposed the exile of their chiefs from the region, or at least their settlement in the district center, far from the Armenian villages.[841] What measures were taken in 1891 is unclear, but fourteen Armenian families who left the villages of Netami, Çamurlu, and Mezral for Russia returned to their villages the same year.[842]

Nevertheless, the problems never came to an end. In May 1895, the Armenian villagers of Karakilise again complained about the misdeeds of the Zilan tribe. Two individuals named Rıdvan and Halid, who were tribesmen of Eyüp Pasha and officials of the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments, migrated from Bayezid and settled in Armenian villages surrounding Karakilise. Moreover, another chief of the Zilan, Ali Bey, who was also a tax farmer, was accused of oppressing the Armenian peasantry through over-taxation. Moreover, one report indicates that almost 400 Armenians had left the region and migrated to Russian territory because of tribal misdeeds. Since such crimes were perpetuated by tribes that were part of the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments, Meclis-i Vükela requested an investigation by the Fourth Anatolian Army.[843] As in the case of the Haydaran, the military officials adopted a more protective attitude towards Eyüp Pasha and the Zilan. For instance, it was reported by Fourth Anatolian Army that a lieutenant, Rıdvan Bey, was settled along with fourteen families in the villages of Hars under the supervision of state officials, and that they already possessed 136 title deeds for the parcels of land in their custody in the village.[844]

Similar conflicts also occurred between the chiefs of the Celali tribe and the peasantry in the Sanjak of Bayezid. Several chiefs of the tribe benefited from the

[841] BOA, DH.MKT 110/10, 11 Agustos 309 (August 23, 1893).
[842] BOA, BEO, 314/23544, 4 Teşrin-i sani 309 (November 16, 1893).
[843] BOA, MV 84/80, 7 Mayıs 311 (May 19, 1895).
[844] BOA, A.MKT.MHM 638/1 (June 3, 311).

opportunities provided by Hamidian Regiments and increased their power at the expense of local peasantry. In 1897, Salih Beg, a certain chief of the Celali tribe and the kaymakam of the 37th Regiment of Hamidian Cavalries intended to build a house in the village of Meryemana (Sağdıç). Despite the population of Meryemana had reduced, the village had been regularly visited by Armenians. It contained an ancient Armenian church and treated as sacred by Armenians. According to provincial authorities of Erzurum and Bayezid, the attempt of Salih Bey to build a house in Meryemana was illegal and he was also forcing villagers to work in the construction of his house. The officials argued that despite a sedentary lifestyle was a desired policy in the region, the wintering village (Şeyhli) - currently in use of Salih Bey is more suitable for his sedentarization. [845] As a result, Ibrahim Bey, the mutasarrıf of Bayezid, had sent army divisions to the village of Meryemana two times in order to prevent Salih Bey to build his house.

When tensions turned into a local crisis, the opinion of Zeki Pasha, the Commander of the Fourth Ottoman Army, was asked. As in the case of the Hüseyin Pasha of Haydaran and Eyup Pasha of the Zilan, Zeki Pasha displayed a more protective policy towards Salih Bey. In his report, Zeki Pasha argued that Salih Bey's desire to build a house and to maintain a sedentary way of life was something desired. According to Zeki Pasha, a great portion of the Celali tribe was residing on the Persian and Russian side of the border. They were reconciled to state and military service at great costs. Such actions of mutasarrıf of Bayezid was unacceptable since he was provoking the tribe and shattering tribal loyalty to the imperial state. At the end of his correspondence Zeki Pasha proposed the dismissal of the mutasarrıf of Bayezid, Ibrahim Bey. [846] The same year Ibrahim Bey was accused of being in contact with

[845] BOA, Y.PK.DH 10/4, 5 Haziran 313 (June 17, 1897).
[846] BOA, Y.PK.DH 10/4, 30 Mayıs 313 (June 11, 1897).

Armenians and Iranians and incriminating the officers of the Hamidian Regiments.[847] Later, Ibrahim Bey was dismissed from his position.[848] This case is not only a good example about the tensions between tribal chiefs and Armenian peasants during the Hamidian era, but also indicates the conflicts between military and civil officials who had different visions regarding the tribal policy to be applied in the region.[849]

Another example of tension between the chiefs of the Celali tribe and the peasantry took place in the village of Arzab (Sağlıksuyu), administratively dependent to the sanjak of Bayezid. The main tension was between Ahmed Ağa, commander of the 38th Regiment of Hamidian Cavalries and Armenian villagers of Arzab. The tensions and conflicts that started in Hamidian era lasted until the demise of the empire. Ahmed Ağa was among the tribal chiefs who had visited imperial capital, upon the invitation of the Sultan Abdulhamid II, following the formation of Hamidian Regiments. In 1891, while he was still in imperial capital, he expressed his intention to became settled in Dertenk, a ruined village in the sanjak of Bayezid. Yet, as this ruined village was without water, he demanded to carry water from Arzab.[850] The administrative council of Bayezid had refused the demand of Ahmed Ağa. In a report dated to 1895, the council stated that the real intention of Ahmed Agha was to seize the lands close to the Arzab. Moreover, the council reported that Ahmed Agha currently lived in Karabulak, a village where water was abundant. The council added that Ahmed Agha was not dealing with cultivation, but maintaining a nomadic lifestyle between his winter quarter and summer pastures. It was also reported that carrying water from Arzab to Derkent was technically impossible. The administrative council

[847] BOA, BEO, 1009/75652, 21.04.1315 (September 19, 1897).
[848] Karataş, *Bayezid Sancağı ve İdarecileri*, 206.
[849] For a discussion on the Hamidian policy of using Kurdish tribes to balance the power of the urban notables and provincial government, see Duguid, "The Politics of Unity," 145.
[850] BOA, I.DH 1227/96115, 4 Mayıs 1307 (May 16, 1891).

finally added that Ahmed Agha's closeness to the Arzab would led to the migration of the villagers of Arzab, who annually paid 70-80.000 piasters taxes.[851]

A commission was formed to investigate the demands of the Ahmed Agha. It was reported by the members of the commission that one the fields currently claimed by Ahmed Agha in the vicinity of Arzab village was formerly owned by Kahya Kigork, an inhabitant of Arzab. Ahmed Agha was also claiming the field which was formerly at the possession of the villagers of Gültepe, another neighboring village. The commission decided first to determine the ownership of these two fields, where Ahmed Agha intended to settle and to carry water from Arzab.[852] It is not clear whether any further investigation was done or the case brought to the court, yet the tensions between Ahmed Agha and villagers of Arzab continued well into the Second Constutional period and villagers continuously petitioned to the imperial state to prevent the oppression of the chiefs of the Celali. [853]

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter analyzes how the increasing commercialization of pastoral production together with the delegation of power to tribal chiefs in matters of taxation and administration resulted in territorialization and stratification of the tribes in the second half of the nineteenth century. Since pasturing grounds were crucial for pastoral production, tribes engaged in ceaseless struggles among themselves to protect or enlarge their pasturing grounds. Aladağ, Tuji, Sinekî, Abagay, and the Karasu-Aras Mountains, the major pasturing grounds of the region, became sites of inter-tribal conflict. This chapter also points to how tribes gradually settled in

[851] BOA, DH.MKT 391/30, 8 Haziran 1311 (June 20, 1895).
[852] BOA, A.MKT.MHM 720/11, 25 Eylül 1311 (7 Ekim 1895).
[853] BOA, DH.MKT 2644/62, 8 Teşrin-i evvel 324 (21 Ekim 1908).

villages despite not abandoning their mobility. Compared to the first half of the nineteenth century, tribes now had defined wintering spaces. Villages were used mostly as winter settlements, while during the summers the majority of tribal members migrated to grazing spaces. As villages and agricultural land were of vital importance for the needs of the animals in winter, tribal conflicts with peasantry was inevitable. In addition, the participation of the tribes in the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments starting in 1891 and their subjugation to only military law enabled them to receive the protection from civil officials and the law. As tribes were conceived as barriers to rising Armenian nationalism and as a military force to be used in a potential Russian incursion, their misdeeds were largely ignored or left unpunished.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

During the first half of the nineteenth century the tribal confederations of the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran wandered along with their thousands of tents and their livestock at the intersection of the Ottoman, Persian and Russian Empires. In this period, they benefited from their undefined subjecthood, the porous nature of the borders, and the indirect nature of rule at frontiers and made various fiscal, military, and political deals with the authorities of the three empires on the frontiers to gain access to wintering and summering places in the Lesser Caucasus and Northeastern Anatolia. Despite their complex migration patterns, the majority of the nomad families of the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran preferred to winter on the Persian side of the "border" where climate was milder and to migrate to favorable grazing grounds in the Ottoman Empire during the summer. By the late nineteenth century, however, wars as well as state- and border-making processes of the imperial powers in northeastern Anatolia and the Lesser Caucasus led to an irreversible transformation of the social, political, and fiscal organization of these tribes. A great portion of the tribal groups had to accept being subjects of the Ottoman Empire, became integrated into Ottoman administrative and fiscal structure, and were "settled" along the northeastern frontier of the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman war-, state-, and border-making processes on its northeastern frontier during the long nineteenth century transformed both imperial and tribal structures. Instead of creating conflict between the empire and frontier tribes, this period led to a new form of mutual dependence. Both sides needed one another and benefited from each other militarily, fiscally, and politically on this contested

frontier. The military and administrative power of the central state began to be felt more and more in this region starting in the mid-nineteenth century. Indirect rule was gradually transformed into direct rule following the elimination of Kurdish dynasties and their replacement with centrally-appointed officials. This process also corresponded to the border-making process. The Ottomans, Persians, and Russians – after a series of wars – engaged in unending negotiations regarding the demarcation of boundaries separating their lands and the determination of the subjecthood of borderland peoples, including a number of mobile tribes. During this process, central imperial states forced local tribes to accept subjecthood, which limited their movement across borders and integrated them into imperial administrative structures. Yet war making, state making, and border making also opened up new institutional and political spaces for the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran tribes, and they actively participated.

The border making between the Ottoman and Persian, and Ottoman-Russian empires made the tribal agencies important. Many of the disputed areas – like Köroğlu, Tambat, Yarımkaya, Kazlıgöl, and Abagay – had also been either the wintering or summering grounds of the borderland tribes during the nineteenth century. The allegiance and loyalty of the tribal groups that used these lands were clearly important to the imperial powers during the making of the borders. In other words, claiming the subjecthood of the borderland people was also a way of claiming the contested lands of the frontier. Starting in the mid-nineteenth century, many tribal chiefs were given exclusive rights and immunities in order to secure their loyalty and allegiance to the Ottoman Empire. As the Ottoman-Persian border largely remained contested and disputed during the second half of the nineteenth century

accommodative policies remained as one of the defining feature of the Ottoman Empire regarding its tribal population in this region.

The Ottoman border and state making attempts in this frontier, the increasing contact with tribal groups, the policies of integrating and/or coopting tribes into imperial state structure corresponded to an age of reform on the Ottoman side of the border. The Ottoman reforms known as the Tanzimat (1839-1876) sought to establish direct relations with imperial subjects in the spheres of administration, taxation, and conscription. The desire to bring tribal groups under direct state administration – that is, to effectively tax and conscript them – were projects related to the Ottoman state-making process in the frontier zone. However, this required the mediation of tribal chiefs, since the subjecthood of these tribes were at dispute and since the lands that they inhabit were contested between Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires. Tribal chiefs were given exclusive rights over taxation, conscription, and implementation of law in their tribal spaces in return for their loyalties for the empire. In other words, as tribes accepted the subjecthood of the Ottoman Empire and became integrated into the administrative and fiscal organization of the Ottoman state, the authority of the chiefs over tribal commoners was confirmed by Ottoman imperial authority. In that respect, Ottoman tribal policy was different in Northeastern Anatolia comparing to Çukurova and Central Anatolia, where Ottoman authorities also used physical force against the tribes to establish a better control over them.

The Ottoman reform movement, which sought to form direct fiscal and military relations with tribes, had to redefine itself to the peculiarities of this frontier zone. The contested nature of the borders, the rivalry between Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires and tribal responses shaped the nature of the Tanzimat reforms in

this frontier. The Ottoman desire to control frontier tribes created new institutional, political and administrative spaces to the tribal chiefs. Tribal chiefs, who were integrated into Ottoman administrative structure, became the sole authority in maintaining the relations between imperial capital and ordinary tribesmen. In other words, fiscal, administrative, and political transformations on the Ottoman East created and/or strengthened a new powerful class in its eastern frontiers. Tribes also became highly stratified in their internal structures. The economic and political gap between the tribal commoners and tribal chiefs widened, which is evident in the conflicts between the villagers of Zomik and the chief of Haydaran, Hüseyin Agha.

In that respect, Ottoman eastern frontiers were not an exception. Empire-wide reforms during the Tanzimat era weakened the power of the local power-holders, who were known as *ayân*. However, while Tanzimat reforms eliminated the old notables, the administrative and fiscal transformation led to the emergence of a new type of notables. Inalcık states how even old notables (*ayân*) maintained their power and influence through becoming part of newly formed administrative and fiscal structure of the provinces, and began to be called as *vücuh-ı belde, muteberan* and *aza-yı meclis.*[854] Similarly, Tolga Cora describes how within the Armenian community old notables gradually left its place to a new type of notables during the Tanzimat years, a period which he defines as "new imperial order." Cora argues that the reforms in tax collection methods avoided the collection of taxes by big magnates - that is to say *ayân*. In this new imperial order, a new type of notable - the *eşrâf* - emerged, who acted as small tax farmers. Thus, this new type of notables acted in line with the fiscal reforms of the empire and were also supported by imperial capital.[855]

[854] Inalcık, "The Application of the Tanzimat and Its Social Effects," 371.
[855] Cora, "Transforming Erzurum/Karin," 156-157.

Kurdish tribal chiefs have always played decisive political roles along the borderland. Nevertheless, they emerged as a new powerful group during the second half of the nineteenth century Ottoman East. Their increasing power was not solely because of the power vacuum created by the elimination of the Kurdish dynasties. As Ottoman Empire sought to benefiting from the tribal groups militarily and fiscally at frontiers and control them efficiently, the authority of tribal chiefs had to be confirmed by the Ottoman imperial state. Tribal chiefs were integrated into the Ottoman administrative structure of the Tanzimat and began to be influential in the administration of sanjaks and provinces of Ottoman East. Many of the tribal chiefs directly and/or indirectly participated into administrative councils. The communication between tribal commoners and imperial state was maintained through tribal chiefs, which is evident in the correspondences, petitions, contracts and etc. In coming decades, many of the tribal chiefs became tax farmers through their local relations. Tribal chiefs were also in contact with merchants and engaged in extensive trade of sheep and contributed to the monetarization of economy in the Ottoman East. In that respect, Kurdish tribal chiefs shared many characteristics with the new type of notables of the Tanzimat. They were not only influenced from the administrative, social, and fiscal transformation of the nineteenth century, but also actively participated in this process.

After a discussion of the terms “nomadism,” “pastoralism,” and “tribalism,” the Chapter 2 analyzes Kurdish pastoralism and tribalism in northeastern Anatolia and Lesser Caucasus. In terms of patterns of pastoralism, the Kurdish pastoralism in this region in the early nineteenth century shared many characteristics with European transhumance, especially Alpine transhumance. Nomadic tribes engaged mostly in seasonal, vertical migrations between wintering and summering spaces of Ottoman

sanjaks of Kars, Bayezid and Van and Persian districts of Revan and Khoy. But unlike the transhumants, Kurdish tribes in the first half of the nineteenth century generally migrated with their entire families. Being exclusively pastoralists and having no knowledge of agricultural production, the nomadic Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran tribes were largely dependent on the outside world during the winters. Despite being favorable for summer grazing, harsh winters and thick snow prevented winter grazing on the Ottoman side of the border. While during the summers, nomads roamed the pastures of Aladağ, Abagay, Sinekî, and Alagöz and the slopes of Mount Ağrı, during the winters they had to settle in villages. Yet none of these tribes had fixed wintering spaces because of the region's political instability in the first half of the nineteenth century. The nomadic families of the Zilan, Haydaran, and some of the Celali were distributed among Kurdish but mostly among Armenian villages by the provincial governors of the Ottoman Empire during winter. Nomads, in return for winter settlement, paid wintering taxes (kışlakiye) and offered military conscripts to the authorities on the frontier. In this "feudalistic context", it was compulsory for the peasantry to provide shelter, food, and hay for the nomads and their animals during the winters. Such obligations became a burden on the Armenian peasantry and contributed to their emigration from the region.

As discussed in Chapter 3, starting in the early nineteenth century, the region turned into a military zone wherein the Ottoman, Russian, and Persian empires engaged in a fierce struggle for political domination and local resources in Northeastern Anatolia and Lesser Caucasus. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the migration regimes of the nomadic tribal groups, their relations with imperial authorities and peasants, and their allegiances and loyalties were shaped by the peculiarities of this military zone. In other words, imperial wars and competition,

shifting boundaries, and imperial attempts to tax and conscript them forced these tribes to adapt to a transforming frontier. Thus, nomadism in this geography did not remain merely an environmental adaptation but also a political one. Mobility in several instances was used to their advantage to avoid approaching wars and the efforts of imperial officials and frontier authorities to collect taxes and conscribe them, as well as environmental disasters. In the case of the Haydaran, I have indicated how tribes used their mobility as an advantage to avoid wars, conscription and taxation imposed by authorities of the imperial powers. The case of the Zilan exemplifies how the wars among the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian Empires, and political instability in the region led to the gradual fragmentation of a large tribal confederation. In the case of the Celali, I have shown how the same wars and border politics disrupted the pastoral ecology of the nomads and pushed them into the banditry.

Chapter 4 discussed the tribal policies of the Ottoman Empire during the Tanzimat period. In this chapter, I have indicated how Ottoman officials of the early Tanzimat period sought to win the loyalty of these tribes, integrate them into Ottoman imperial structure, turn them into their own subjects, and finally make them agricultural cultivators. Starting in the 1840s, the mobility of nomads across the borders of the three imperial powers and their disputed subjecthood began to be perceived as problems for the territorial integrity of the empires and for the security of the borders. In the Conferences of Erzurum (1843-1847), Ottoman and Persian authorities made their first subtle attempts to demarcate the borders, define the subjecthood of borderland tribes, and prevent their migrations across borders. Both the Ottoman and Persian Empires lay claim to the subjecthood of the tribes because they were an important source of revenue and manpower on the frontiers.

Immediately after the Treaty of Erzurum was signed in 1847 and the Kurdish notable families governing eastern frontiers as yurtluk-ocaklıks began to be suppressed by the Ottoman Empire, numerous families of the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran moved to Ottoman territory and negotiated the terms of their subjecthood with the Ottoman Empire. The lack of pastures and insufficiency of wintering spaces on the Persian side of the border played a primary role in their decision.

Chapter 5 discusses how the authority of the tribal chiefs of the Zilan, Celali, and Haydaran – after a series of local negotiations – was confirmed and strengthened by the Ottoman imperial capital. These tribal confederations were allocated land on the eastern frontier for their sedentarization. The majority of the Zilan were located in Kars (and then Karakilise and Eleşgirt following the Russian occupation of Kars) while the Celali were located in Bayezid and the Haydaran north of Lake Van in Patnos, Adilcevaz, Erciş, and Bargiri. Since lands allocated to tribal groups were mostly disputed between the Ottoman and Persian Empires, the allegiance and loyalty of these tribes became crucial for the Ottoman Empire's claim to these lands. The chiefs of the tribes were given exclusive rights over the taxation and administration of their tribesmen to win their loyalty to the Ottoman Empire.

As discussed in Chapter 6, this process corresponded to the increasing commercialization of pastoral production in the Ottoman East. Increasing demand for meat in Istanbul, Aleppo, Damascus, and Egypt turned sheep farming into a lucrative business for the tribes of the region. Instead of settling and becoming involved in agriculture, tribal groups preferred to maintain their sheep farming, which was the most lucrative economic activity in the region. Nevertheless, they gradually adopted transhumance or semi-nomadism within clearly-defined boundaries. The sheep trade and the delegation of power in matters of administration

and taxation to tribal chiefs contributed to the territorialization and stratification of tribal groups. As the sheep trade escalated, so did struggles over pasturing grounds. Inter-tribal conflicts over pasturing grounds compelled them to become highly territorial. The delegation of power to tribal chiefs starting in the 1850s, the tax farming of villages in the 1890s, and the participation of the tribes in the Hamidian Cavalry Regiments contributed to their further stratification. Tribal chiefs became wealthier and politically more powerful compared to the lower echelons of the tribes and the peasantry. This process also contributed to the impoverishment and dispossession of the Armenian and Kurdish peasantry, causing their migration to urban spaces. Those who remained in tribal lands were subject to forced labor.

This dissertation indicates how imperial states and tribes – rather than acting as hostile camps – had a reciprocal fiscal, military, and political relationship in frontier districts. In the case of the Ottoman Empire, Ottoman authorities needed tribal support along its northeastern frontier not only to bolster claims to disputed land between the Ottoman and Persian Empires, but also to "enliven" them with tribal populations. The Ottoman Empire, as well as the Persian and Russian Empires, needed the military support of tribal groups during the wars among them. The empires also needed the pastoral economy of the tribal groups. Tribes played a crucial role in supplying meat to urban centers. Tribes, in return, needed the imperial powers for their pasturing spaces and winter quarters. Tribal chiefs further benefited from imperial support to subdue rivals and increase authority over tribal commoners.

This dissertation focuses on three tribal confederations instead of a single one. Looking at three different groups enables a better understanding of Ottoman tribal policy along its frontier. A comparative approach reveals that although each of these tribes emerged as stratified and territorial in the late nineteenth century, they

followed different trajectories over the course of the long nineteenth century. Their geographical location, internal organization, and the nature of state-tribe relations determined the ways these tribal confederations evolved in time.

The Zilan were closest to the Russian border and were most affected by the territorial expansion of the Russian Empire in the 1820s. They lost a fertile pastoral habitat following the Russian annexation of Revan in 1827. Wars between the Ottoman and Russian Empires in ensuing decades further contributed to the dispersion of the families of the Zilan. As its chiefs could not exert authority over the many segments dispersed over a large area, the Confederation gradually fragmented. The Zilan, Kaskî, and Cemaldinî emerged as independent tribes and were recognized by the imperial capital as separate administrative units by the 1850s. By the late nineteenth century, these tribes each had their own spaces and were organized under separate chiefs.

The Celali tribe, unlike the Zilan and Haydaran, was never organized under a single, powerful chief in the nineteenth century. They were fragmented in terms of geography, loyalty, and internal structure. During the first quarter of the century, they were divided by the "borders" of the Ottoman and Persian Empires. Following the Russian annexation of Revan in 1827, their pastoral habitat turned into a triplex confinium. Territorial and internal fragmentation, competition over pastures, and the disputed nature of their territory between the Ottoman and Persian Empires paved the way for shifting alliances, loyalties, and conflicts within the Celali. As the region remained politically unstable, many segments of the Celali were pushed to the fringes and into banditry of the peasantry, rival clans, and travelers. The Celalis remained fragmented in the late nineteenth century and were organized under separate chiefs.

The Haydaran tribe, which benefited from their geographical location close to both the region's most fertile agricultural lands and the pastures north of Lake Van – rose to become of the largest tribal confederations in the region. A tribe of 2 thousand tents at the beginning of the nineteenth century, it grew to some 20 thousand families by the end of the century. The Haydaran did not fragment and protected their territory along the north shores of Lake Van until the demise of the empire. During the late nineteenth century, their chiefs exerted exclusive authority over a large region; however, the chiefs, who belonged to the same family, engaged in fierce struggles for leadership of the tribe.

Though a great part of this dissertation focuses on the Ottoman side of the borders, there were Zilan, Haydaran, and Celali families – albeit not large in size – on the Persian and Russian sides. Due to the scope and organization of this dissertation, the Russian and Persian sides of the border are not addressed exhaustively, and a study of these families from the 1850s onward would bring about a more comprehensive understanding of pastoral politics, alliances, loyalties, and identities.

The time frame covered by this dissertation ended with the 1890s when ethno-religious conflicts peaked and new dynamics, classes, and ideologies began to become influential in the region. Although this dissertation does not focus on the early twentieth century or analyze these new dynamics, it provides a foundation for a better understanding the early twentieth century.

APPENDIX A

TRIBES AND THEIR SUB-DIVISIONS[856]

Table A1: Zilan and its Sub-divisions in 1850s

Derviş Paşa	Alexander Jaba
	Zîlî (300)
Redki / Redkanlu (220)	Ridiki (200)
Eyleyanlu (90)	
Aliyanlu	
Dilhiranlı (310)	Dilxiri (80)
Kürdikanlu (70)	Kürdiki (150)
Gelturanlı	Geltûri (100)
Şeyh Bızini (100)	
Cemaldinili (300)	Demâ'd-dini (300)
Bizkanlu / Bıziki	
Süveydanlu	Sewîdi (100)
Beruki / Berukanlu (800)	Berûki (400)
Karaçorlu	
Milliyan / Millivanlu (150)	
Azizi	
Cekemanlı (110)	
Motanlı	
Salanlı	
Karahacılı	
Karakanlı	
	Pirexâli (100)
	Deliki (60)
	Mamzîdi (60)

[856] Derviş Paşa's report, 154-161; Jaba, *Recueil de Notices et Récits Kourdes*, 1-3.

Table A2: Celali and its Sub-divisions in 1850s

Derviş Paşa	Alexander Jaba
Halikanlı (550)	Xelikân (500)
Sakanlı (480)	
Belhiki / Belhikanlı (560)	
Mısırkanlu (160)	
Cünükanlı/ Cenukanlı / Cunukî (200)	
Hasasoranlı (240)	Hasa-Sauran (300)
Kızılbaşuhlu (190)	Kizilbaş-oğliyan (500)
Banuki (160)	
	Dunekân (500)
	Tema-xauran (200)
2380	2000

Table A3: Haydaran and its Sub-divisions in 1850s

Derviş Pasha	Alexander Jaba
Haydaranlu (800)	Heideri (500)
*Hılki /Hilikanlu	
*Başemi /Başemiyan	
*Laçeki / Laçekiyan	Lateki (200)
*Dertopi / Dertopan	
*Soran	
*Akubi / Akubiyan	
*Asiyan	
*Seçargan	
*Şeyh Hasenan (300)	
Hamdikanlı (600)	Hemdiki (300)
**Etmani / Etmanikan	
**Melle Mire	
**Ma‘arhori / Ma‘horan	Ma’ir xuran (100)
**Benuşteki / Benuştekan	
Ademanlı (600)	Ademi (350)
***Hüveydanlı	
***Kalkan / Kalkî	
***Mikailian	
*** Meruiyan	
***Bekran	
***Zagobi /Zagoiyan	

***Aski /Askan	
***Şeyhki/Şeyhkan	
***Cafoi/Cafoiyan	
***Şemski/Şemskan	
***Badoyi/Badoiyan	
***Kaski/Kaskan	
***Tacdoyi/Tacdoiyan	
	Milli (400)
	Azizi (100)
2000	2000

APPENDIX B

AN OFFICIAL REPORT ON OTTOMAN FRONTIERS [857]

İran ülkasıyla hemhudûd ve civâr olan memâlik-i hakaniyede kain bi'l cümle serhâdat ve kaza ve nevahî ve ale'l husûs Erzurum Eyaleti'nde vaki Muş ve Hınıs ve Tekman ve Bayezid ve Eleşgird ve Van ve Kars ve Çıldır havalilerinde mütemekkin olan reâya perâkende ve perişân vücuhla rahm ve şefkate şayân olub zikr olunan mahallerin kurb ve civâr ve kazaları ekrad-ı bed-nihaddan ibâret olduğundan başka mutasarrıf ve muhafızlarının dahi birbirleriyle emniyetleri olmadığı cihetle her biri birer aşireti ihtihsâb ve istinâd ederek aşâir-i merkumeyi kış vakti her kes kendü kazasının fukarasına tarh ve tahmil ve yem ve yiyecekleri fukaradan olmak üzere asâkir misüllü kışlak vererek mecmuu hayvanat ve kendülerinin idarlerini fukaraya tevzi etmeyi adet eylediklerinden ma'ada yaz mevsimi geldikde aşâir-i mezkur muktezâ-yı cibiliyet reddiyeleri üzere birer bahane ile oldukları kazanın mecmû' mal ve eşya ve hayvanâtını garet ve tarc ederek İran tarafına ve İran'da başı sıkılana beru tarafa ubur ile aralıkda kangi tarafın aşireti olduğu fark olunmayub fukaranın bu vechle nehb ve garata tahammüleri kalmadığından herbirleri bir tarafa firarları cihhetilye kazalar nehy kalmış ve ale'l husûs seferlerde Erzuum valileri bulunanlar dahi aşâir-i mezkureye nefs-i Erzurum kazalarında kışlak verüb külliyetlü rüsumâtlarını tama' etmiş olduklarından bu keyfiyet fukâranın izmihlâl ve perişânlıklarına sebeb olub işbu ekrad-ı bed-nihad böyle serseri geşt ü güzardan men' olunarak tarafın ekrad ve aşireti olduğu fark ve temyiz olunmak lazımeden olduğuna binâen zikr olunan ekrad def-i gaile-i mazarratları ve beyne'l devleteyn payidâr olan esâs selm ve safvetin teyid ve tahkîmi zımnında bu defa dersaadete takdim olunan

[857] BOA, HAT 804/37129, (1813).

tesvîd mucebince birer kıta senedin verilub alınması husûsunu şehzâde-i müşarileyh tarafından müşarileyhe gelen elçileri ile müşarileyh müzakere etmiş olub bu husûsun muvafık rey-i sami olduğu suretde İran Şahı tarafından bundan akdem derbâr-ı saltanat-ı seniyyeye azimet eden Mirza Muhammed Rıza (…) tanzimi mütevakkıf-ı irade-i seniye idüğü ve mirza-yı mumaileyh ile husûs-ı mezkurun tanzimi uyamamak lazım gelürse ol tarafda şehzâde-i müşarileyh ile müşarileyh beyninde sened-i mezkurun alınub verilmesi muvafık rey-i ali olduğu suretde taraf-ı müşarileyhe işâr buyrulmuş.

APPENDIX C

PETITION OF THE CELALI TRIBE[858]

Münazaa fih olan Celali aşiretinden olub çend sene mukaddem devlet-ı aliyye-ı ebedü'd devam toprağı olan Bayezid Sancağı'nda iskân olduk ise de bundan iki sene evvel sabık livâ-yı mezbur kaimakamı saadetlü Behlül Paşa'nın mahdumu Mehmed Bey'den bazı hususata mebni rencide olub devlet-i İran toprağına azimet ettik ise de cenab-ı zillulah-ı padişah velinimet alem-penah efendimizin zir-ı himayesinde bulunan ahâli ve fukâra ve aşâir haklarında olan şefkat ve merhamet-ı seniyeleri ne derece aşikâr ve nümayân olduğu cümle indinde müsellem ve işbu cedide-i adliye-i hayriyenin asar-ı menafi reyü'l ayn müşahede olduğundan ol vechle rıza-ı ubeydanemiz ile refakatimizde bulunan altmış sekiz hane aşiretimiz ile devlet-i aliyye-ı ebedü'l devama dehaletle Bayezid Sancağı'nda münâsib harabe kuraları tamir ve şenlik edüb sair aşâir misüllü rüsum-ı kişlakiyemizi dikkat ve zamanıyla tediye ederek her ne ruz û şeb ve dua-yı beka-yı ömr ve padişahi ile meşgul ve müvazebet üzere olduğumuzu arz ve beyân zımnında li-ecl es-sened işbu mazbata-yı ubeydanemiz tersim Bayezid kaimakamı izzetlü Feyzullah efendiye verilmişdir.

19 Ş 66

[858] BOA, I.HR 67/3277, (June 30, 1850).

APPENDIX D

PETITION OF THE HAYDARAN TRIBE[859]

Van Sancağı dahilinde kain bi'l cümle aşâir ve kabâil ve nefs-i Van kudema-yı hanedan ve erkanın yakinen malumları olub her halde tasdik edecekleri vechle aşiretimiz ahâlileri mine'l kadim devlet-i aliyye-i Osmaniye aşâirinden olub ebâ 'an ced livâ-yı mezbûr dahilinde hayme nişin ikâmet iken usât-ı ekrad ve eşkiyâ-ı bed-nihaddan Han Mahmud ve kurenâlarının vaki olan zulm ve itisâflarına bir dürlü tab-aver tahammül olamadığımız hasebiyle bundan on iki sene mukaddem bi'z zurur İran tarafına firâr ve nakl-i hane-i birle dehâlet ve fasl-ı baharda Abagay nahiyesine gelerek Mahmudi memurlarına senevi külliyetlü yaylak ve hediye bahâlâr verüb can ve malımızı feda ederek gün götürmekde iken (…) hamd ve'l menâ saye-i kudretvaye-i cenâb-ı şahânede usât-ı merkûmenin naire-i tuğyan ve daire-i isyanı geçmiş sene külliyen def' olunarak zaman-ı ma'dalet nişân cenâb-ı mülükânede bi'l cümle fukara ve zuefa aherde zulm ve teaddilerinden kurtularak emn ve aman müsterih-i mal ve can olub kaffe-i aşâir dahi münâsib mahallere iskân olunarak nüfuslarını yazdıkları ve ilerüde hisselerine isabet edecek vergülerini verüb ziraat ve hırasetle meşgul olarak serdade-i inkiyad ve itaat oldukları müsellem olub ancak aşiretimiz ahâlileri dahi devlet-i aliyye ebed-i müddet-i saltanat-ı seniyyenin kadim aşâirinden (…) ehl-i sünnet ve'l cemaatden olub eğerce üsât-ı merkûmenin dest-i azar ve zulmünden dolayı İran'a firâr ve dehâlet etmiş isek de rabbimiz te'ala ve takaddüs hazretleri zat-ı şevket-simât hazret-i mülükâneye tükenmez ömr ve (…) ihsan buyursun zat-ı hümâyunlarına mevahib-i celile-i cenâb-ı bari olan (…) fukara perveri rahm-ı şefkat kerametleri şahâneleri cümle bendegan teba-yı saltanat

[859] BOA, I.MSM 52/1345, 21 Ş 264 (July 23, 1848).

seniyeleri haklarında mebzul ve raygan olduğuna binâen ve kemal-i afv ve ihsan-i şehriyarilerine mağruren bu sene nahiye-i mezkûre bi'l vürud hayme nişin ikâmet ve damen-i afv ve inâyet bulunduğuuz malum-ı alileri buyruldukda aşâir-i seniye misüllü bizler dahi maiyetimizde bulunan bi'l cümle komşularımızla beraber livâ-yı mezbur dahilinde ve civârında olan münasib mahallere haneler binâ ve inşâsıyla bi'l iskân ikâmet ve yerlü hükmüne girmek ve bir ferdi ketm ve ihfâ etmeyerek nüfuslarını yazdırmak ve kuvve-i maliye ve cemiyet-i sekenemize göre ilerüde tarh olunacak hisse-i vergümüzü sâir iskânları icrâ olunan aşâir gibi vermek çift çubuk tedarikiyle ziraat ve hirâset ve aşar-ı şeriye ve rüsûmat-ı sâiremizi kamilen tediye ve ifâ eylemek ve herhalde harekat ve sekenâtımızı şeriat-ı mathara-yı Mahmudiye'ye tatbik ve usûl-i Tanzimat-ı Hayriye ve tensikat-ı mülkiye-i adliyeye ve rızâ-yı ali cenâb-ı padişahiye tevfik ederek hilaf bir güne hareket etmemek ve aşâirimiz ahâlilerinden hilaf-ı rızâ-yı ali bir güne harekete mütecâsir olanalar olduğu halde tedibat-ı lazımesinin icrâsı zımınında sancağımız valileri bulunan zevat-ı kerim taraflarına götürüb teslim etmek ve kaimakam bulunan zatın şer-i şerif ve kanun-i münif ve adet-i beldeye muvafık olan her bir emr ve reyine mutabaat ve mutavaat eylemek üzere Van ve civârı mahallerde ve yahud şenlikden hali ve harâbe olub can ve malımız emin olacak mahallere yerleşdirilub bi'l iskân haneler binâ ve inşâsıyla ziraat ve hiraset ederek edâsı fariza-i zimmet kaffe-i muvahhidin olan şevketlü muhabetlü kudretlü atufetlü padişahımız efendimizin dua-yı beka-yı ayam ömr ve hazret-i şahânelerine bizler dahi ruz û şeb meşgul olarak saye-i ihsan vaye-i cenâb-ı mülükdaride istihsâl-i esbâb ve istikmâl-i huzur ve rahat-ı bendeganemiz husûsuna müsade-i aliyeleri (…) ve erzan buyrulmak niyazında işbu mahzar güne arzı-ı hal (...) itimad-ı ubeydanemiz takdimine ihtiyar kılındı. İnşallah tealla muhatalim

alilerine buyruldukda ol babda ve her halde emr u fermân hazret-i men lehü'l emrindir.

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APPENDIX E

AN OFFICIAL REPORT ON TRIBES OF VAN[860]

Sabıkü'l zikr Abagay nahiyesi gayet münbit ve mahsuldar ve ol havalide ve belki bütün İran ve Turanda emsalsiz bir arazi idüğü müstağni-i arz ve tezkardır. Fakat, acınır yeri şuradır ki böyle bir nahiyenin adet-i ağnam rüsumu otuz dört-otuz beş bin ve bedel-i aşâr-ı dört beş bin guruşa kendülerine bir suretle ihale olunub elli bin guruş dahi vergü tarh olunarak bunun ekserisi bakayada kalub çevrilmekte imiş. Mumaileyh Ali Ağa'nın İran'dan avdeti esnasında zimmetinde bulunan bakaya tamamen tahsil olunduktan maada ağnamın tadadı zamanı mürur etmiş ise de yine ağnam rüsumu namına olarak beraberince İrana gitmiş olan haneler hisesine takriben isabet eden yirmi bin ahz ve tahsil ile başkaca mal sandığına açıkdan irad kayd edilmişdir. Seksan yedi sene-i şemsiyesinin hulülünde mukaddem ve muahher alınan mebaliğ birleşdirilub bedel-i sabık ittihazıyla meydan-ı müzayedeye konulmuş ve altmış bin guruşu tecavüz eylediği sırada beher res ağnama bir guruş daha bedel-i rüsum zammı irade-i seniyesi vürud ederek bu husus Timur oğulları ve avanesi serir rişte ittihazıyla sair aşiretler dahi hafiyen ifsada çalışmış iseler de men-i ifsadatlarına muvaffak olunarak aşiretlere kabul ettirimiş ve Abagay nahiyesi rüsumu yüz bin guruşa baliğ ettirilerek daha ziyade zamma tahammül ve tabları var iken Timuroğlu kumpanyasıyla serkeş-i hafiyesi bulunan zabitan-ı askeriyeden taliblere vuku'-ı tenbih üzerine nacar kef-i yed etmeleriyle maslahaten fesad karışub memul olan (…) hazine zayi' olub yedd-i ahere kalmışdır. Nahiye-i mezburun öşr hasılatı dahi on altı bin guruş tecavüz ettirilmiş ise de yine arzu olunan muttalib hasıl olmamışdır. El

[860] Extracts from the document BOA, Y.EE 33/7, 1288.

hasıl nahiye-i mezkurede mütevattan olub kenüsüne teallükü olan haneler tefrik ve iki müdirliğine taksim olunduğu halde yalnız kendüleri senevi elli bin guruş vergü vereceklerini biraderi oğlu Ahmed Ağa vefatıyla hafiyen ifade eylemişdir. Fakat, tefrik maddesi mahzurdan salim olmayacağı cihhetle zam-ı vergü hususu vakt-i ahere teallük edilmişdi. Mumaileyhin bu ifadesinden istifade olunduğuna nazaren nahiye-i mezbur bir yük guruşdan mütecaviz ve bir güne muhtemell olduğu misülü rüsum-ı ağnam ve öşr-i şeriyesi hakkıyla cibayet ve taşir olunur ise iki yük guruş tecavüz edeceği iştibahdan varestedir. Fakat, nahiye-i mezkure inşası irade buyrulub mübaşeret olunan kışla-i hümayun ikmal edilur ve derununa bir iki bölük süvari-yi asker-i şahne ikad kılnur ve bununla beraber bir de kaymakamlık teşkil buyrulur ise varidat-i mirriyenin (…) edeceği derkar ve diğer aşâir ve kabailin zabt ve rabtı kesb-i suhulet edeceği aşikardır.

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Balada zikr olunan aşiret müdirlerinin hükümet-i seniyeye hidmet-i mebrure ve musadakat-ı sahiheleri olmadığı misüllü efrad-ı aşirete dahi vücuhla muzırr ve hem de hal-i vahşet ve bedeviyette kalmalarına bais ve sebeb-i müstakildir. Bu müdirlerle cümlesi torun tabir olunur mensub oldukları aşiret yani aşiret halkının güya hanedanzadelerinden olarak aşiret halkı bunların eyadi-i tegalüblerinde adeta esir meyanesindedir. Efrad-ı aşiretten birisi bunların ve akrabalarının hilaf-ı rızasında bulunduğu takdirde malını müsadere eder döger, söver her ne canı ister ise icra eyler. Hükümete gidüb şikayet edemez ve seslerini bile çıkaramazlar beyne'l aşâir bir katl maddesi vukubulsa tarafeyn torunları biryere gelüb meyanelerinde sulh ederler ve ak sakallu tabir olunur oymak muhtarlarına bir hilat iksa ve maktulün veresesine bir mikdar akçe veyahut ağnam vesair hayvanat itasıyla iskan ederler ise de verese-i maktulün yeddine az bir şey geçüb ma bakisi müdire kalur bununla iş netice pezir

olmayub maktulün kabilesinden birisi fırsat buldukda katilin akraba ve teallükatından veyahut kabilesi efradından her kim olur ise olsun katl ve idam edüb bu cihetle kıtal-i madde-i faciasının ile'lebed arkası kesilmez ve taraflar bu cihetle dahi müstefid olurlar. Aşairin mal-ı vergisine gelince dun bir halde olub şu halle hiçbir zmanda tezayüd edemez ve aşiret halkının kazandıkları akçeleri birer suretle ellerinden alub kendüleri sahib-i servet ve yesar ve efrad-ı aşiret fakr ve müzayakaya düçar olmakdadır. Gerek müdir ve gerek torunlar vergü ve rüsum-ı ağnamlarını tamamıyla aşiret halkına tahmil edüb bir akçe vermezler ve her birileri sürüyle ağnama malik olub senevi külliyetli ağnam ticareti ederler. Bu babda akl-ı […] acizanemce aşiret müdirlerinin külliyen ilgası ve bunlara beyhude olarak verilmekde olan maaşların […] edilmesiyle efrad-ı ahaliye adeta iskan tanıyub bulundukları kaza kaimakam ve nahiye müdirlerine iltihak ile kabile muhtarları maarifetiyle mürettebat-ı mirriyeleri tahsil olunmak ve hukukça büyük küçük davalarda hükümetçe rüiyyet kılınmak kendü haklarında pek büyük hayr ve muceb-i menfeaat olacağı itizarından geri duramam. Bu sureti ayanlarında fehm ve idrak edenler ve arzulayanlar var ise de torunlardan ihtiraz-ı naçar ihtiyar-ı samet ve sükut iderler.

APPENDIX F

SUPPLEMENTARY FIGURES

Figure F1 : Sanjak of Bayezid and Borderland Tribes [861]

[861] BOA, HRT.h 445, (1915).

Figure F2 : Province of Erzurum[862]

[862] BOA, HRT.h 1745, (1909).

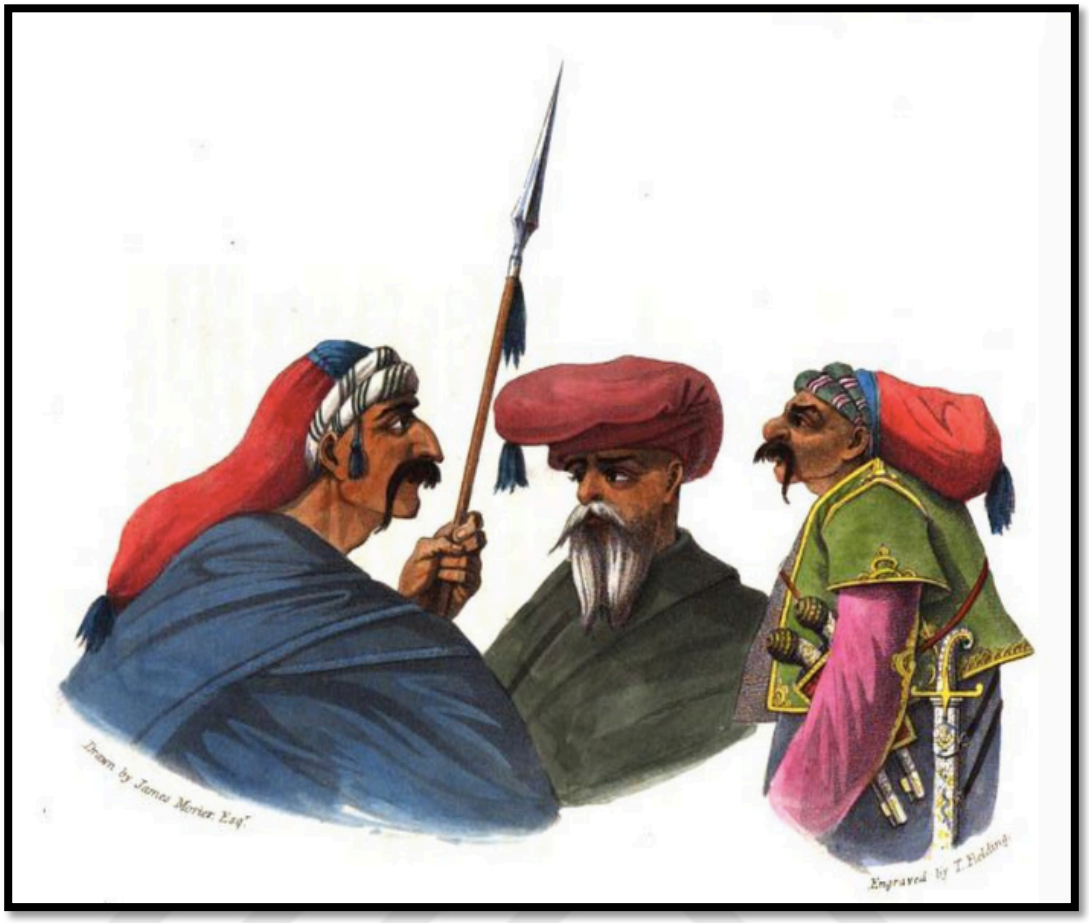

Figure F3 : The chiefs of Zilan in the 1810s[863]

[863] Morier, *A Second Journey Through Persia, Armenia, and Asia Minor*, 331.

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